THE PLIGHT OF CIRRIA — High adventure in the highest places
THE DJINNI'S RING — Even a djinni needs help sometimes
THE CRYPT OF ISTARIS — Dungeon exploration can be a *blast*

Dungeon™

ADVENTURES FOR TSR® ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

JANUARY/FEBRUARY ISSUE #9
VOL II, N 5 USA

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Dungeon™

ADVENTURES FOR TSR® ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1988 ISSUE #9

COVER: The cloud castle of the Arch-Mage looms high above the jungle. To get inside, however, our intrepid adventurers must first get past Ezoran's demon. Valerie Valusek's first color cover illustrates a pivotal scene in "The Plight of Cirria."

The More Things Change...

If you look in the box below this column, you'll notice that Roger Moore and I have switched hats. As of this issue, I now have the title of editor, reflecting the fact that I have had the major responsibility for producing DUNGEON™ Adventures for the last several issues.

If I tell you a bit about how we produce our magazines, you'll understand that this isn't a major shake-up. If you look at our other two publications, you'll see the same names appearing in different roles on each. Roger has primary responsibility for DRAGON® Magazine, Patrick Price is the editor of AMAZING® Stories, and now I'm in charge of DUNGEON Adventures. But we check and crosscheck and proofread each other's magazines, so that it's more a community effort than one person's sole responsibility.

So, if you have any words of praise for this issue, send them to me. All complaints, however, will be passed along to the rest of the guys.

We've tried something new in this issue: a solo module that you can play without a Dungeon Master. In Vince Garcia's "The Djinni's Ring," you play Moonstone, an elf who is whisked away on an Arabian Nights adventure. Everything you need to know is right in the module. Let us know how you like the idea of individual-play adventures.

We received lots of letters after my last plea for feedback from readers, but don't stop sending them now. Even though we don't have space to print all your letters, we read every single one and listen to what you have to say. Suggestions for interesting quotes for this page are still being eagerly accepted.

Barbara G. Young

P.S. Welcome to the world, Tasha Joan Hickman. May all your dragons be good ones.

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Vol. II, No. 3

PUBLISHER: Mike Cook
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"Unless something goes terribly wrong we'll have you back about five minutes before you left, so there'll be time to spare and nobody'll ever need to know you were gone at all. . . . And if something goes terribly wrong it won't matter whether we ever get back at all."

Mrs Whatsit
A Wrinkle in Time, Madeleine L'Engle

LETTERS

Dear editor:

I have one small complaint with DUNGEON™ Magazine. Most adventures call upon the greed and egoism of PCs to motivate them into action. I am no moralist, but if my PCs are going to kill and risk their own lives, it will not be because they are greedy. I would much rather play a bored halfling who is forced to risk his welfare because his homeland, family, or friends are endangered by a dragon than a greedy bunch of dwarves that just want the dragon's wealth.

Monetary wealth is the most predominant motivation in DUNGEON Adventures. Emotional, religious, and heroic motivations are constantly overlooked. Druids, clerics, elves, paladins, and such would never justify risking their lives, the lives of their companions, or even the lives of their enemies in some cases, for the purpose of monetary of magical wealth.

Let's start playing good guys and, better yet, writing adventures for them.

Robin Kaczmarczyk
Beverly Hills, California

Dear editor:

The AD&D® game is growing very fast. The *Wilderness* and *Dungeoneer's Survival Guides,* the *Manual of the Planes,* the FORGOTTEN REALMS™ setting, and the upcoming second edition of the AD&D game have been (or soon will be) released. What will this do to DUNGEON Adventures? Will we be able to use the Survival Guides in our submissions? Will the restriction on the outer planes be lifted with the release of the *Manual of the Planes*? Can we place adventures in the Forgotten Realms? How will the second edition change the submission rules? Are we allowed to submit modules based in the WORLD OF GREYHAWK™ setting now?

Jason Trussell
No address given

We would definitely like to get some adventures based on Manual of the Planes, *but please remember the scope of our magazine. Huge adventures wherein the PCs scoot about among the planes (or even cover a great deal of one plane) just won't fit. Use a specific plane as a detailed adventure setting, but keep the adventure of manageable proportions.*

You can also set adventures in the World of Greyhawk, the Forgotten Realms, Kara-Tur, the Known World of the D&D® universe (especially as detailed in the Gazetteer series), Blackmoor, or Krynn. However, even though most future TSR, Inc., AD&D game adventures will be set in the Forgotten Realms, we do not intend to insist on this in DUNGEON Adventures. Feel free to detail your own settings, as always.

Yes, you can use information in the Survival Guides, but remember that not everyone owns these books. If your entire module is a series of references to pages in the guides, you may need to do a bit of paraphrasing for those without access to the books. If you prefer to detail your own methods for handling weather, terrain, etc., you can give DMs the option of using either your system or a system from one of the books.

To be honest, we don't know how the AD&D game's second edition will change what we look for in a module, but we suspect it will actually change very little at DUNGEON Adventures. There will probably be a period of time after the second edition is released when we are still printing modules accepted months (sometimes even a year or more) before — modules written under the "old" rules. We don't even expect everybody to rush right out and buy the game's second edition (although we hope you will). There will be a transition period during which we will probably ask authors to make any needed adjustments so that their adventures can be played under either set of rules. But, since we don't know yet what the changes will be, we can't really speculate on how we will handle the problem of some of our readers having one set of rules and other readers going by another.

Dear editor:

So far, the dungeon I have most enjoyed is the non-euclidean geometry dungeon, "Forbidden Mountain," by Larry Church (issue #6). After reading it a few more times to become familiar with it, I plan to try it on my players. I think they'll really enjoy it. Still, I am confused about one part of the dungeon. On page 36, the PCs find the skeleton of Lord Barnabus, but on page 39, under section 11 ("Hallowed Ground"), it says ". . . this is the room where Barnabus [met] his end. . . ." I don't think that is correct, because it goes on to talk about Chelson's *rod of resurrection.* Please clarify this for me. Thanks!

Another thing I would like to see presented in your pages is a city. A large city, to be exact, that could contain many dungeons. What I was thinking was that, in one issue you would detail the city in general and present the players with a map of the city. You would also list special places in the city such as temples, thieves' guild, castle, and other interesting places that could be detailed in later issues.

Mark Alan Schaffer
Raleigh, North Carolina

As stated on page 35 of "Forbidden Mountain," the Evil One annihilated *(that is, disintegrated) Chelson; no body was left. Chelson dropped his* rod of resurrection *before that occurred. The reference to Barnabus in room 11 should have said: "This is the room where Chelson met his end. . . ." Sorry about that.*

We've had quite a lot of people ask for detailed city adventures, but I'm not sure

DUNGEON™ (ISSN 0890-7102) is published bimonthly by TSR, Inc. The mailing address for all material except subscription orders is DUNGEON, P.O. Box 110, Lake Geneva WI 53147; the business telephone number is (414) 248-3625. Individual issue price is $3.75. DUNGEON is available by subscription throughout the world. Subscription rates via second-class mail are as follows: $18 in U.S. funds for one year (six issues) sent to an address in the U.S. or Canada, $35 in U.S. funds for surface mail delivery to any other address, and $52 in U.S. funds for air mail delivery to any other address. Payment in full must accompany all subscription orders. Payment should be by check or money order, made payable to TSR, Inc., or by charges to valid MasterCard or VISA credit cards. Send subscription orders with payments to: TSR, Inc., P.O. Box 72089, Chicago IL 60678. The issue of expiration of each subscription is printed on the mailing label for each subscriber's copy of the magazine. Changes of address for the delivery of subscription copies must be received at least six weeks prior to the effective date of the change, in order to assure uninterrupted delivery.

A limited number of back issues of this magazine are available from the TSR Mail Order Hobby Shop, P.O. Box 756, Lake Geneva WI 53147. For a copy of the current mail-order catalog, write to the mail order department at the above address.

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Application to mail at second-class postage rates is pending at Lake Geneva, Wisc. Postmaster: Send address changes to DUNGEON, c/o TSR, Inc., P.O. Box 110, 201 Sheridan Springs Road, Lake Geneva WI 53147.

we're ready to tackle a long-term project such as you describe. Besides, something very similar is being done by the RPGA™ Network in POLYHEDRON™ Newszine. It's called "The Living City," and if you'd like to get involved in its creation or learn more about the RPGA Network, write to: RPGA Network, TSR, Inc., P.O. Box 509, Lake Geneva WI 53147.

Dear editor:

I have some worries about the levels you are assigning adventures. The range in toughness for the same strength party seems pretty wide. Take "White Death" and "House of the Brothers" (issue #6). In "White Death," 4-8 players of 4th-7th level (a party averaging 33 levels) takes on 36 hp of dragon. In "Brothers," 3-6 players of 6th-10th level (36 levels) take on 200 hp of giants plus 61 hp of hell hounds. To make matters worse, "Brothers" is heavily trapped, and the PCs don't know what they are facing until probably too late, while the PCs in "White Death" know from the start they are after a white dragon and may well meet him when they are at full power.

So, we have one adventure where the party is an easy winner, and another where the party is going to be lucky to survive. Consistent bias is easily handled by the DM, but this erratic evaluation is worse than useless. The party will get bored with easy wins and even more distressed by disasters. Hopefully, you don't have this problem too often.

David Carl Argall
La Puente, California

Dear editor:

First of all, I feel your performance this past year has been tremendous!! The balance of long and short modules has been well maintained. Normally the levels of the modules are balanced as well. (Normally, mind you. I noticed that issue #6 had no low-level modules.)

I plan to run most of the modules I read (I wish I had a group that played so often), but I like to read the modules for ideas, too. As for dealing with players who have read the modules, I prefer using the rack or the gibbet, but thumbscrews are quite effective also.

Todd Barkus
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Well . . . the rack and thumbscrews seem a bit too severe. We do want to increase our readership, you know, not scare people away. If it becomes obvious that a player has read the adventure, the DM should feel free to make enough changes to keep that player on his toes. It can often be much worse to be sure of what's going to happen — and be wrong — than to be unsure but wary.

Dear editor:

The key to getting the most out of gaming is creativity. Short, thoughtfully prepared adventures will be remembered well after lengthy and trite ones. Here is my checklist of aspects that make a great module.

Dungeon, wilderness, and city adventures all enjoy benefits, but to me a combination of any two or all three is a better mix. Get out of the dungeon and discover variety. Let PCs interact with NPCs. This sort of variety has been found in DUNGEON Adventures in such modules as "Caermoor" (issue #2), "Trouble at Grog's" (issue #4), and "The Jingling Mordo Circus" (issue #7). These adventures contain buildings or dungeons of sorts, but their focus is more on story and unique locations than on mindless killing.

The composition of buildings and dungeons is the second area that concerns me. Everything within a structure should be there for a purpose. If there are not enough encounters to fill up a dungeon or building, it should be smaller. In "After the Storm" (issue #6), we discover *The Phantom,* a sunken ship with nearly 30 rooms, including a cabin for each deck hand and six cargo holds. Other than considerable mapping and treasure finding, not much happens here. A couple of holds with a hodgepodge of contents would be more realistic and could keep PCs busy longer. While they are digging through crates is the time when underwater nasties will spring upon them.

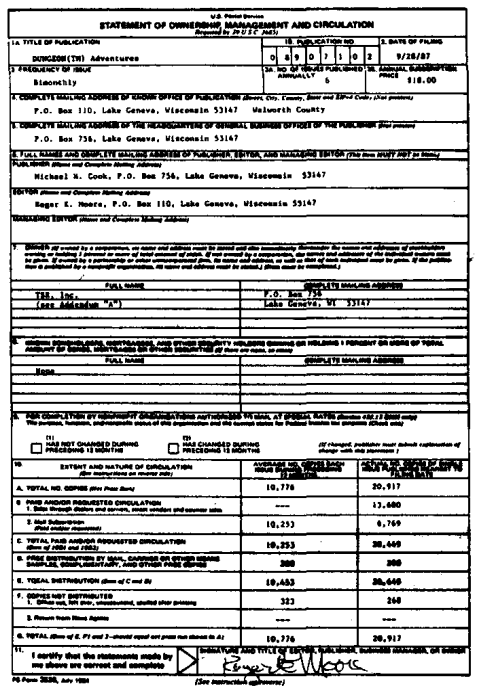
An example of creative dungeon composition is found in "The House of the Brothers" (issue #6). This natural cavern contains only seven encounter areas, which are laid out credibly and contain a point of interest or encounter in each.

Well-developed monsters and NPCs are what an adventure hinges on. Monsters and villains should be special, lest the encounters become decided by a die roll on a wandering monsters chart. In issue 6, the fog giant brothers Erdol and Karzahk have enough spice to make them unique. Each has unusual treasures that befit his fighting style and needs. The DM is clued in on their favored modes of attack. They also have added depth because of their age. One can imagine them overhearing invading PCs and complaining to one another about how their joints ache. After carving up a party, they slump to the ground and talk about how much easier this all was in the old days.

Overall, the cast in "Trouble at Grog's" was probably the best conceived bunch to appear within your pages. All the NPCs have motivations that give the DM insight on how to role-play their characters, as well as their own distinct traits. The better a DM role-plays, the better the players will also.

One doesn't need a psychiatric dossier on every NPC to play them properly, but carefully preparing a character who plays a major role in an adventure adds distinct flavor. If a writer has any creative thought to begin with, he won't leave things for the DM to flesh out. Modules are purchased for the writer's ideas, not to create more work for the DM.

Cory S. Kammer
Glendale Heights, Illinois



STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION

1A. TITLE OF PUBLICATION: DUNGEON(TM) Adventures
1B. PUBLICATION NO: 0 8 0 7 1 0 2
2. DATE OF FILING: 9/28/87
3. FREQUENCY OF ISSUE: Bimonthly
3A. NO. OF ISSUES PUBLISHED ANNUALLY: 6
3B. ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION PRICE: $18.00
4. COMPLETE MAILING ADDRESS OF KNOWN OFFICE OF PUBLICATION (Street, City, County, State and ZIP+4 Code): P.O. Box 110, Lake Geneva, Wisconsin 53147 Walworth County
5. COMPLETE MAILING ADDRESS OF THE HEADQUARTERS OF GENERAL BUSINESS OFFICES OF THE PUBLISHER: P.O. Box 756, Lake Geneva, Wisconsin 53147
6. FULL NAMES AND COMPLETE MAILING ADDRESS OF PUBLISHER, EDITOR, AND MANAGING EDITOR
PUBLISHER: Michael A. Cook, P.O. Box 756, Lake Geneva, Wisconsin 53147
EDITOR: Roger E. Moore, P.O. Box 110, Lake Geneva, Wisconsin 53147
MANAGING EDITOR:
7. OWNER: TSR, Inc. — P.O. Box 756, Lake Geneva, WI 53147
8. KNOWN BONDHOLDERS, MORTGAGEES, AND OTHER SECURITY HOLDERS OWNING OR HOLDING 1 PERCENT OR MORE OF TOTAL AMOUNT OF BONDS, MORTGAGES OR OTHER SECURITIES: None
9. FOR COMPLETION BY NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS AUTHORIZED TO MAIL AT SPECIAL RATES: (Section 412.12 only)
☐ HAS NOT CHANGED DURING PRECEDING 12 MONTHS ☐ HAS CHANGED DURING PRECEDING 12 MONTHS

10. EXTENT AND NATURE OF CIRCULATION	AVERAGE NO. COPIES EACH ISSUE DURING PRECEDING 12 MONTHS	ACTUAL NO. COPIES OF SINGLE ISSUE PUBLISHED NEAREST TO FILING DATE
A. TOTAL NO. COPIES (Net Press Run)	10,776	20,917
B. PAID AND/OR REQUESTED CIRCULATION 1. Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales	----	13,680
2. Mail Subscription (Paid and/or requested)	10,253	6,769
C. TOTAL PAID AND/OR REQUESTED CIRCULATION (Sum of 10B1 and 10B2)	10,253	20,449
D. FREE DISTRIBUTION BY MAIL, CARRIER OR OTHER MEANS SAMPLES, COMPLIMENTARY, AND OTHER FREE COPIES	200	200
E. TOTAL DISTRIBUTION (Sum of C and D)	10,453	20,649
F. COPIES NOT DISTRIBUTED 1. Office use, left over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing	323	268
2. Return from News Agents	----	----
G. TOTAL (Sum of E, F1 and 2—should equal net press run shown in A)	10,776	20,917

11. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner: Roger E. Moore

PS Form 3526, July 1986 (See instructions on reverse)

THE LURKERS IN THE LIBRARY

BY PATRICIA NEAD ELROD

Some monsters don't have any class.

Artwork by Larry Dixon
Cartography by Diesel

Patricia Elrod tells us that she receives help with her writing from her husband, Mark, and their dog, Ben Beagle. Mark gives support and inspiration, while Ben makes sure she doesn't overwork by insisting (several times a day) that she lob his tennis ball across the yard. This exercises not only the feet but the fingers, helping Patricia avoid writer's cramp. This is Patricia's third appearance in DUNGEON™ Adventures.

"The Lurkers in the Library" is an AD&D® game adventure suitable for 3-5 characters of 1st-3rd level and of any class or alignment, although there should be at least one fighter in the party. The town of Ferrantio and its surroundings may be tailored to fit a DM's world, for the library is the prime concern of the players. The DM should keep in mind that, until recently, this area has been in a cultural slump. Books are still rare, and technical knowledge is valued. Newcomers attract the attention and interest of the locals and are plied with questions. This scenario may be used when PCs seek the services of a sage, or as a link between major campaigns.

For the Dungeon Master

The northern regions of Umbak are well populated and almost civilized, but the only true cultural center of the land is the famous old university town of Ferrantio. Sitting on a wide, flat shelf of land butting against the side of low Ferrantio Mountain, the town is surrounded on its exposed three sides by stone walls, but these are very old and have not been kept in good repair. After it was besieged and burned 200 years ago by orcs, the town ceased to be a military center, but it recovered and resumed its ancient tradition as a center for education.

Aside from the odd brawl that occurs near the alehouses, there is little crime and no need for a city guard. A few of the wealthier citizens carry swords, but these are worn more for status than for self-defense, though the players need not know this. The university emphasizes academics over physical education, and most of the students have little free time to devote to learning combat skills.

The local noble, who lives 20 miles away, is very enlightened in regard to education and, contributes support to the various colleges in Ferrantio. This generosity is firmly rooted in common

sense; the university attracts students, and students bring in outside money to delight the taxpaying merchants and innkeepers of the town. Nearly all of Ferrantio's economy and reputation depend on the school in some way.

Each year, scholars and teachers from far and wide make the long trek through the mountains for the privilege of studying at the university, for unlike other educational centers, Ferrantio boasts the only true library in the whole north. Past wars with orcish and human nations destroyed nearly all the old libraries and their contents; books and old scrolls of any kind are extremely rare. The last 200 years have been peaceful, though (except for an occasional orc or kobold raid), and a slow rebuilding of the old knowledge has taken place.

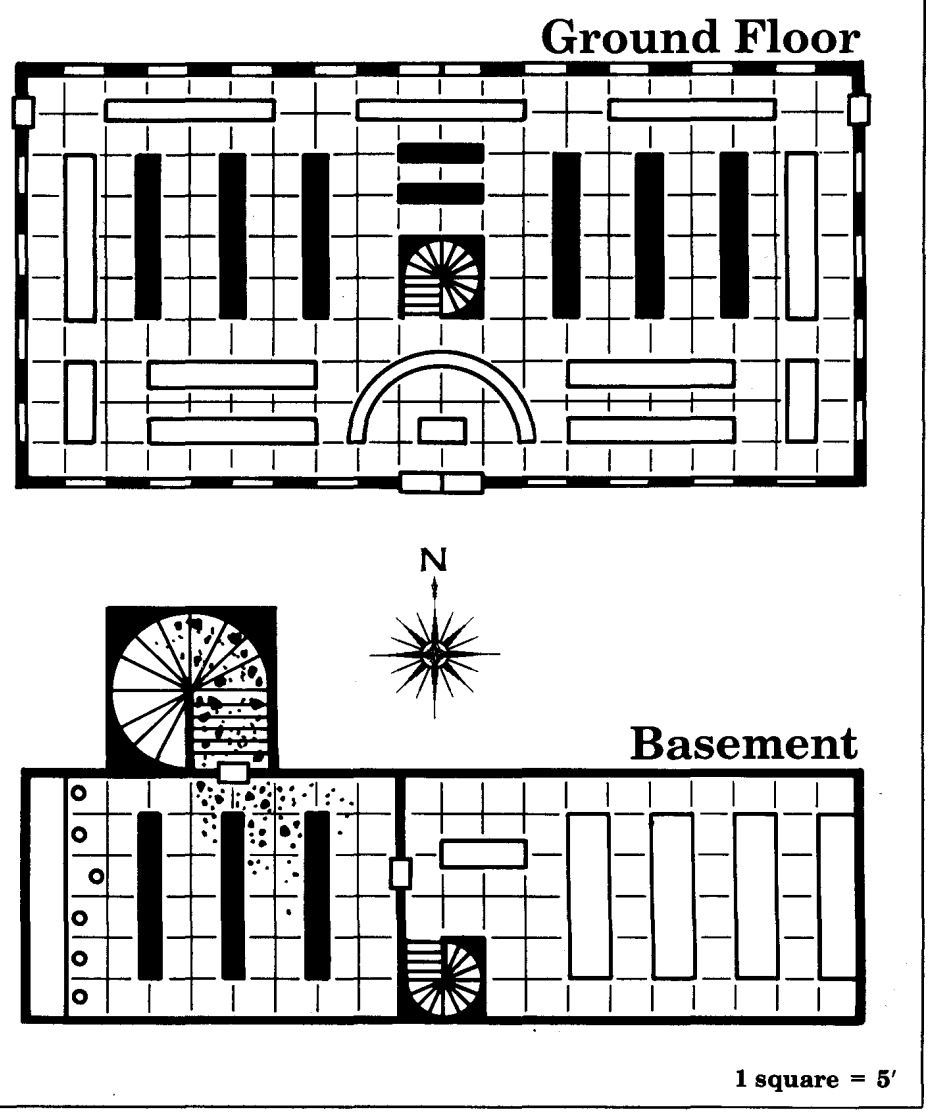
The Town

About 1,000 adults live in Ferrantio and the lands around, and a quarter of the town dwellers are students. The locals are kept busy with paper and ink manufacture, as well as the usual home industries of producing food and clothing, and providing lodging. Ferrantio is an old town, and its citizens are proud of their heritage. They know their home was once the capital of culture and learning of the north, and was much larger and grander than it is now, but they look forward to the day when they can surpass their ancestors. Knowledge is the way to progress (and prosperity), so the whole town is alert to acquiring and preserving any books that come by. Travelers discovered to be carrying books are strongly urged to visit the library in the center of town.

The Library

The library is a large building, 50′ × 100′ in size, made entirely out of white stone and brick with a gray slate roof. Its most expensive and noticeable features are the many glass windows on all four sides of the structure. These are made up of hundreds of diamond-shaped panes, each no more than a handspan across, held in place by strips of lead. The glass allows the maximum amount of light inside, eliminating the need for candles and oil lamps. The librarians are justifiably paranoid about fire, and it is forbidden even for heating. During the winter months, they and the students are kept warm only by their clothing and a strong dedication to learning.

FERRANTIO LIBRARY



The reading and copy room takes up all of the library's huge interior; its 20′-tall ceiling is supported by lofty columns. On passing through the two 5′-wide front doors, the first thing one sees is the head librarian's large desk and, behind the desk, a semicircular bank of files. These files are the catalog and complete cross-index for the 1,500 books in the library.

Flanking this area and along the walls (to benefit from the windows) are long wooden tables and numerous chairs and stools. Six 10′-tall bookshelves dominate the east and west sides of the room, and though sparsely populated, all the shelves contain some books. More shelves than needed have been provided to allow for growth of the collection. In the center of the room, a waist-high railing protects a 5′-wide, stone-flagged spiral staircase leading down to the basement. Just behind the stairs, two smaller bookshelves hold books waiting to be copied or repaired.

Usually, 10-20 people are kept busy from morning till dark at copying. Many of them are students who are hard up for money after paying tuition

costs. Those who need the work (and can write neatly and quickly) can earn 5-7 gp per month in their spare time, if they are diligent. In Ferrantio, this is sufficient for food, clothes, and lodging if a student isn't too hungry, too fashion conscious, or too particular. Whenever possible, students are allowed to copy books within their fields of study, thus extending and enriching their personal knowledge of their chosen subjects.

The head librarian is Portia d'Ferranta, whose ancient family helped to found the town. She is a sage learned in humankind — legends and folklore, theology and myth — and is a specialist in local history, politics, and genealogy.

Portia d'Ferranta: AC 10; MV 12"; NPC sage (HD 8d4); hp 18; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); S 10, I 18, W 17, D 11, C 12, Ch 13; AL LN.

Portia is an energetic woman in her fifties, with short, iron-gray hair and a no-nonsense manner. She lives for her library and her work there, and most of the money she earns as a sage goes to purchase new books. She has also been known to make a straight trade of her knowledge for a coveted volume or scroll. She is highly regarded in Ferrantio and is important enough in local politics to wield no small power of her own. Her insatiable desire for more books is common knowledge in town, and her book-buying quirks are treated with good-natured and helpful tolerance by the citizens.

Book-bearing travelers are made very welcome in Portia's library, and she has been known to keep the nobility waiting while haggling over the price of a tome with a humble peddler. If she is unable to buy a book, she offers the owner a fee to allow her scribes to copy it. Her base rate is 1 sp per page of writing. A 30-page book on the medicinal properties of fungi, with writing on both sides of its pages, will net its owner 60 sp or 3 gp. A six-page pamphlet outlining the history of the village of Little-Hutney-on-the-Chute will earn 6 sp, and so on.

In the basement, at the bottom of the spiral stair, is a 30' × 55' brick-lined chamber. Just to the left of the stair landing is a single heavy oak door that opens inward. Suspended in holders from the 10' ceiling are four glowing copper globes (6" across, 5 lbs. weight) which have *continual light* cast upon them, providing the only kind of artificial illumination allowed in the library. The room contains a desk, chair, four long study tables, and their chairs.

The desk belongs to the assistant librarian, Nardo d'Ferranta, Portia's 25-year-old son. He is also a sage, well versed in general history but specializing in mathematics and physics. He shares his mother's love of books and is custodian in charge of the library's newest and most valuable volumes.

Nardo d'Ferranta: AC 10; MV 12"; NPC sage (HD 8d4); hp 14; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); S 15, I 18, W 15, D 8, C 11, Ch 12; AL LN.

Beyond the oak door is a slightly smaller brick-lined chamber, 30' × 45', also lighted by four *continual light* globes. Two hang from the 10' ceiling and two are in removable brackets on the far wall. Beneath them is a long study table and six chairs.

Three 20'-long bookshelves going up to the ceiling fill the rest of the room. They contain the most valuable treasure in the whole region: a collection of books about magic. There are over 100 books, scrolls, and pamphlets, all donated to the library according to the will of the late mage Alibatar d'Brinnel, an alumnus of the University of Ferrantio. Alibatar had other things on his mind than neatness, and so the tedious job of cataloging and indexing his collection has fallen to the library.

The university has but one specialist in magic, the elderly Doctor Waldus Thorngreen. When he is not busy teaching, Doctor Thorngreen can usually be found in this section of the library basement, trying to sort Alibatar's legacy. He is a slow worker, though, and not much better at organization than the dead mage whose books have become his responsibility. The library has had the collection for nearly a year, and the good doctor has barely managed to divide the books up into the most general categories.

Doctor Waldus Thorngreen: AC 10; MV 6" (arthritic); MU 3; hp 7; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type (unarmed); S 8, I 15, W 12, D 14, C 9, Ch 12; AL CN; spells: *detect magic, continual light, read magic.*

Just two of the books actually contain spells, and these are kept in the inner chamber and never allowed upstairs. The rest, in their various languages, deal with magic theory, philosophy, ethics, history, applications and research, legends, and biographies of famous magic-users of the past, including a colorful autobiography of Alibatar himself.

The 100 books barely fill up even a quarter of one bookcase, but as in the reading room above, these shelves were constructed in anticipation of acquiring more books in the future. All of Alibatar's books are on the shelf farthest from the door but closest to Thorngreen's work area at the table.

The Problem

The PCs hear glowing praise of the local library almost as soon as they get into town. If they take the hint from the locals and visit the library, they arrive in time to see dozens of people milling around nervously outside, peering through the windows and craning their necks to see over the crowd at the front doors. No one knows for sure what is going on, except that there is some kind of serious disturbance within.

No one is posted to keep people out, so the PCs can easily push their way into the front lobby of the building. A heated argument is in progress at the front desk between some senior teachers and the head librarian, Portia d'Ferranta — and Portia is losing. She insists she be allowed to go downstairs, but the others are equally insistent she remain where she is until the situation can be properly investigated.

A young male halfling, lying stretched out on the desk with a damp cloth on his forehead, loudly agrees with the teachers. Their worried looks and tense postures indicate they are out of their depth. If the PCs ask some obvious questions or volunteer to help, their services will be gratefully accepted. Julius, the halfling student presently on the desk, tells his story quickly and with more than a trace of terror.

Julius: AC 9; MV 9"; zero-level halfling; hp 3; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); S 12, I 14, W 10, D 15, C 14, Ch 12; AL NG.

Until a few minutes ago, all was quiet and normal in the library. Then Julius came staggering up the spiral stairs from the basement, yelling blue murder. Only a moment before, he had been taking some blank paper down to Nardo, the assistant librarian. Julius rounded the last turn of the steps and noticed that Nardo was not at his desk as usual, and the big oak door to the inner chamber was wide open. Because of the nature of the books there, that door is always kept shut. The halfling thought something might be wrong, but

was not sure if he should investigate.

Just as he cleared the bottom landing and could see a little into the book chamber, he heard a rumbling crash within; a flood of white smoke filled the rooms, and Nardo and Doctor Thorngreen began shouting an alarm. Nardo emerged briefly from the smoke, but something like a tentacle wrapped itself around his head and neck, and with a cut-off cry, he was yanked backward out of sight. Terrified, Julius tore up the stairs to get help and now flatly refuses to go down again.

Portia thinks there is nothing to the disturbance but a student prank and wants to have a look for herself. The others think something more sinister is afoot and try to persuade the PCs to check things first. If the adventurers do not volunteer out of altruism or curiosity, Portia promises to pay them a reasonable sum for services rendered, either in gold or information, but only if there is any true danger awaiting below. She insists on accompanying the PCs into the basement, and other NPCs reluctantly allow her to do so.

Downstairs, they find the oak door has been shut and there is a quantity of fine white dust fanning out from it over the floor. There are vague marks in the dust, perhaps footprints, but these have been made unreadable by the arcing scrape of the bottom of the door as it swung shut. The door can only be locked from the outside and is easily opened by anyone pulling the handle. The rest of the chamber is deserted.

On Nardo's desk is an open book on mathematics and a paper half covered with numbers and notations. He was apparently interrupted, for his work is broken off in midword. His quill pen has been dropped on the floor; the ink on it is still wet. The faint powdering of white dust lies undisturbed over everything, and some of the finer particles still hang in the air. This powder is chalky in texture and taste. Anyone with masonry experience can identify it as plaster dust. Portia will know what it is but might not mention it, being worried about her son Nardo and anxious to find him.

If asked about the room beyond the door, Portia's gives information according to her personal reaction to the party. If they are a rough-looking, untrustworthy lot, she divulges as little as necessary. A clean-cut group with good manners gets more cooperation. At the least, she briefly outlines Doctor Thorngreen's cataloging activities and mentions that *some* of the books and scrolls came from the Alibatar collection.

As part of the general knowledge of the area, the PCs have a 25% chance to have heard of Alibatar. Magic-users have a 50% chance to know he was rich and famous, and a 10% chance to know he specialized in conjuration and summoning spells. Portia knows he had a *monster summoning I* spell from reading his autobiography, but she won't mention this for fear of frightening off the adventurers. She also knows about Doctor Thorngreen's unfortunate and possibly dangerous habit of reading aloud to himself. At some point in the proceedings, the DM might let Portia drop this alarming detail into the ears of the party and let them draw their own conclusions.

The Book Chamber

There is little to be seen upon opening the oaken door except a slightly thicker layer of dust on the floor and a confusing number of footprints in it. One clear, partial print appears to have been made by a large, heavy boot. Thorngreen and Nardo, as far as Portia can recall, wore only low, soft slippers.

The room is darker than it should be, for all the light globes have been removed. Any PC producing a torch or candle and attempting to light it receives a sharp reprimand from Portia. The only other alternative light sources are the globes hanging in the outer room, which may be removed from their holders. If used as a club or thrown, these globes can cause 1-6 hp damage, but any sudden shock or impact has a 5% chance of causing the light to fade and go out. The globes are library property, the spells on them donated by Thorngreen. Portia will certainly notice and discourage any abuse of them.

The first long shelf is 10′ away from the door; its empty surfaces have only a little white dust on them. To the right, more footmarks are visible, but all mixed together and unclear. Just off the center of the north wall is a gaping black hole in the brickwork, and beyond is a wide flight of stone steps spiraling down. There is a lot of rubble on the floor and steps, its position indicating that something broke through into the room at this point. Portia is utterly mystified and unable to explain where the stairs lead or why they're there. Signs in the dust indicate several sets of footprints going down and out of sight.

The table against the far wall is covered with several open books, stacks of blank and written-upon paper, pots of ink, some used-up quill pens, and a penknife with Thorngreen's initials on it. The chair at the center is pushed away from the table, far out of line from the rest. An open book and a sheet of paper partially covered with writing lie on the table here. Unless someone can *read magic,* the language in the book is unfamiliar. The paper is written in Common, though, and contains a listing of the book's contents. A magic-user can identify the spell on the page as *detect magic,* matching it with the last notation on the paper list.

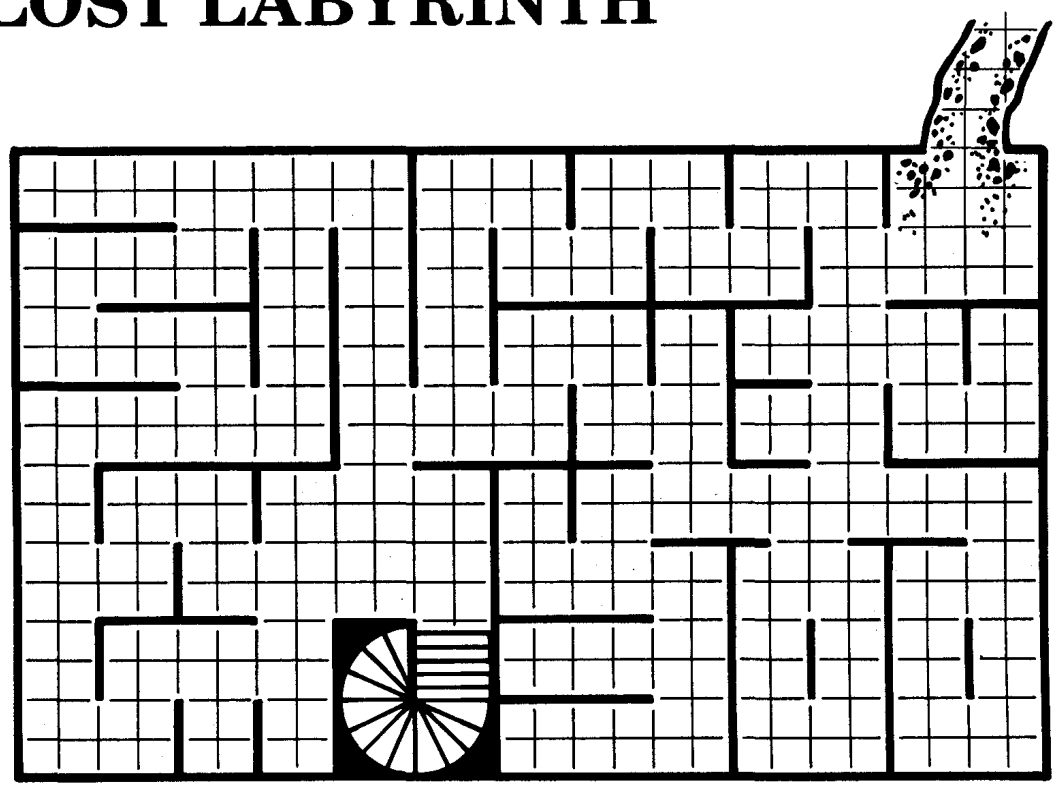
Stairs Into Darkness

The stairs are 10′ wide, but the hole is less than half that in height and width, so tall characters will have to stoop to get inside. The stairs descend 30′ to a dark chamber filled with stale but not foul air; the workmanship of the stairs is excellent but obviously very old. Portia thinks that the staircase is part of the original foundation of the old city of Ferrantio, a remnant of the time before it was destroyed centuries ago during the orcish siege and fire.

The room at the foot of the stairs is 20′ × 30′, with a 10′ ceiling and openings to the north, south, and west (see The Lost Labyrinth map). There are no doors across these openings. The walls are actually shelves going up to the ceiling and filled to overflowing with books — more books in this one section alone than in the entire library upstairs. The complete chamber is 80′ × 130′. Its walls and floor area are divided by rows and rows of linked and freestanding bookcases. The cases are 1′ wide, and all are crammed to the limit with books accessible from either side of the bookcases. The sight of all these thousands of books is so overwhelming to Portia that she faints dead away (no saving throw) and doesn't revive for 2-5 rounds.

On the stone floor in the north opening of the room at the bottom of the stairs is a new goose-quill pen. The ink is dry by now, but its stained end points deeper into the stacks of books. Anyone making a successful *hear noise* roll at this opening (using the thief ability or

THE LOST LABYRINTH



that on page 60 of the *DMG*) hears muffled voices from somewhere ahead.

A little background is helpful here. Long, long ago, when the original librarians of Ferrantio knew the city was going to be invaded, they prepared this huge chamber for the safekeeping of their books. They were in haste to set up the shelving and unintentionally created a labyrinth as they worked. They blocked off the stair entrance from above so well that later builders used the wall as a foundation for the new library. There was one other exit, in the northeast corner, which led to an escape tunnel. This was plastered up as well, sealing the books up for the future. With the burning of the city, none of the librarians bothered to return.

A few days prior to the arrival of the PCs, a small band of roving orcs found a cave on the other side of Ferrantio Mountain and sheltered in it for the day. Poking around the back wall of the cave, the orcs discovered some artificial construction; they soon had it down and began exploring the tunnel beyond. It led to yet another blank wall, which they broke through to discover the books. Having no use for them, the orcs used several volumes to feed their fire in the cave. When they explored the book storage area, they found the stairs going up and began gouging their way through yet another plaster wall.

The noise they made was faint at first. Doctor Thorngreen was concentrating so deeply on his work that he did not notice anything odd until the orcs were nearly through the wall. When the scrapes and knockings became loud enough to disturb him, he quickly called for Nardo in the next room to listen. Having led rather sheltered academic lives, neither of them could understand the cause of the noises until the orcs suddenly broke through the wall in a billowing cloud of plaster dust. Nardo turned to run for help, but the orc leader's whip caught him around the neck and dragged him back. This was the "tentacle" that Julius saw.

The orcs are holding Thorngreen and Nardo prisoner somewhere in the labyrinth of books. Having questioned the librarians in Common, the orcs now know they are under the Ferrantio Library and that the books around them are probably valuable enough to ransom or sell. The orcs want to carry off the best volumes for themselves and are forcing their captives to look for them. Having stolen the light globes from the upper chamber, the orcs are using them instead of torches so their human captives can see.

The orc leader is a scarred half-orc warrior named **Pulcut** (AC 4; MV 9″; F2; hp 17; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 17, I 11, W 10, D 14, C 16, Ch 5; AL LE; chain mail, shield, scimitar, dagger, whip, light crossbow). His second-in-command is his orcish half-brother, **Guggle** (AC 6; MV 9″; HD 1; hp 8; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; AL LE; ring mail, shield, short sword, horseman's mace, dagger, short bow, quiver with 13 arrows). Pulcut and Guggle get along with each other about as well as oil and water. Guggle especially enjoys baiting his older half-brother and never seems to learn that the thumps he draws down on his thick skull are his own fault. Pulcut is a belligerent bully and is highly sensitive about his name. If anyone makes fun of it, like corrupting the pronunciation to "Polecat," he goes berserk and immediately attacks the offender, even if it is a fellow orc. This rage gives him +1 to his damage but

−2 to hit. The other **orcs** (AC 6; MV 9"; HD 1; hp 5 each; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; AL LE; ring mail, shield, broad sword, dagger each) should equal in number the PCs in the party, thus giving the PCs a good fight in a free-for-all.

The orcs' location in the maze is up to the DM and the playing situation. At first, they may not even be aware of the presence of the party, unless the PCs make a lot of unnecessary noise. The books and shelves tend to absorb sound and distort it, making it difficult to trace a noise to its source. Neither side is going to know how many are in the labyrinth, causing a maximum amount of confusion for all concerned. The orcs are on the move, so the action may resemble a cross between running combat and a game of hide-and-seek.

Thorngreen and Nardo have their hands tied, but can still walk and are being herded by Pulcut and Guggle. If the odds really move against them, the orcs try to escape out the northeast tunnel, taking the prisoners along as hostages.

The players may determine the PCs' movements, but they won't have time to stop and draw maps. Signs may be left on the floor to mark their passage, but the orcs may find these and use them to locate the party.

The PCs should keep in mind the high flammability of the surroundings. Any sort of flame attack has a 75% chance to ignite the books around them, whether the attack hits its target or not. The borrowed light globes should provide the PCs with sufficient illumination, though the orcs will immediately discard their globes in favor of 60' infravision from the moment they are aware of the PCs, to surprise someone by attacking out of the dark.

PCs who defeat the orcs and recover the hostages merit the usual number of experience points, but a bonus of extra points should be awarded to characters doing the least amount of damage to the books. Though the temperature and humidity have been constant in the underground chamber, preserving many of the books, these volumes are still old and fragile, and must be treated gently.

If the odds go against the PCs and they need help, one way to get them out alive is for Portia to revive and run upstairs for help. The presence of large numbers of people — even unarmed people — will give the orcs second thoughts and require them to make a morale check.

Concluding the Adventure

The entire town of Ferrantio — and especially Portia — will be grateful to the PCs for their efforts to rescue the hostages and their help in discovering the old books. Their financial reward should be reasonable but not outrageous, for this is a small academic town that does not have a lot of money to throw around.

The DM should determine what is fair and feel free to substitute services or goods for cash, but the PCs should retain the experience-point value for their records. If the PCs came to Ferrantio to consult the sage, Portia is only too happy to answer their questions for free, but only up to a point. She is going to be an extremely busy librarian for the next few years as she supervises the organization of all her new books, and she is very anxious to get to work. Ω

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U.S. General Services Administration

THE CRYPT OF ISTARIS

BY RICHARD FICHERA

A mission with an unforgiving deadline.

Artwork by C. Bradford Gorby
Cartography by Diesel

We finally tracked Richard Fichera down in Orange, California to tell him this adventure would soon be published. When not producing adventures and game-related articles, Richard is a technical writer for Northrop Corporation. This is his first appearance in DUNGEON™ Adventures, *but his articles have appeared in past issues of* DRAGON® Magazine *("Creative Cursing," #77; "The Gypsy Train," #93). In addition to gaming, Richard enjoys such diverse pursuits as French cuisine and wilderness backpacking.*

"The Crypt of Istaris" is a tournament module for the AD&D® game that was used at the GATEWAY '85 game convention. It is intended to be played by eight players over a period of four hours, with scores based on the party's achievement of certain goals and avoidance of unnecessary hazards. In regular campaigns, 6-8 characters of 3rd-5th level may participate. Tournament player characters should be of the same levels, forming a mixed group of good- or neutral-aligned fighters, clerics, thieves, and magic-users. All PCs, for tournament purposes, should worship the Finnish deities described in *Legends & Lore;* in campaign play, this is not necessary as the religions involved may be altered.

This particular scenario was designed with two types of players in mind: the thinking player who wants tricky puzzles and mysteries to solve, and the adventurous player who wants excitement and fast-paced action. "The Crypt of Istaris" should satisfy both types.

If converted from tournament use to campaign use, the DM may make other adjustments. For instance, instead of the evil brotherhood of Hiisi holding the town of Hornboro for ransom with a four-hour time limit, the evil clerics could charge the town exorbitant "protection" money or enslave some of the townspeople. The party of adventurers could then receive a message from the town telling of its oppression. This would give the PCs reason to sneak into Hornboro, make contact with Father Verdain, and quietly make their way to the cemetery. As long as the adventurers are careful to keep under cover, the priests of Hiisi should have no reason to bring on the destruction.

This adventure would also serve as an excellent introduction to a long underground campaign, given the subsurface river and the troglodyte realms to which it runs. An inventive DM with a

copy of the *Dungeoneer's Survival Guide* could start an Underdark campaign (much like that introduced in the super-module GDQ 1-7, *Queen of the Spiders.*

Adventure Background

The following text should be read or given to the players before the start of a tournament game. It may be altered as desired in regular campaign play.

You and your allies have adventured together for some time now, earning a few gold pieces and a bit of fame. But adventure does not last long in one place, so eventually you found yourselves heading home to the town of Hornboro — just in time to see caravans of overstuffed wagons and carts being hastily hauled out of town by panic-stricken villagers. The few travelers you spoke to whispered quickly of evil men with magic that put the entire city in danger. It wasn't long before messengers came to you, begging you all to come to the high temple of Ahto, god of the seas, to see the high priest, Father Verdain. Once at the temple, you were rushed to the study of the high priest for a brief conversation.

"Many have been the times when you have come to me for help that fell outside your own capabilities," said Father Verdain. "Now, it is time for me to come to you.

"Hundreds of years ago, in Hornboro, there lived a great and powerful mage named Istaris. While for many years he provided great benefit to this city, in his later years the fear of death took him, and his good nature twisted toward evil. He became obsessed with the idea of escaping the grim judgment of the god of death, Tuoni, and so began a number of experiments in the black arts, hoping to find some key to immortality. After much work in the area, he knew that there would be no way to preserve his body indefinitely, but that he might be able to keep his soul alive to continue his existence if his remains were properly handled. To accomplish this, he built himself a home beneath the cemetery here in town. The motif of this house was death, so that in every room, death would be the main subject. In one room the body would be prepared; in another, the coffin built; and in yet another, the unholy rites recited. These were the deeds of an obsessed and unbalanced man.

"It is said that in the end he failed, and that for the last hundred years he has rested, body and soul. But before he was sealed in his sarcophagus, great magics were poured over his body, as per his wishes. Even today, that magical power awaits the hand of some other being to find a use for it — and, indeed, we all fear that this has happened.

"We have recently discovered that his tomb has been entered many times during the last three months by priests of Hiisi, god of evil. This group is known as the Dark Brotherhood, reputed to be the beloved of Hiisi, for they inflict more misfortune upon mankind than any other of his followers. To show his gratitude to these most malign of clerics, Hiisi gave them the location of a forbidden relic, which the clerics then acquired. This talisman is known as the Scepter of Dir-yabon, who in ancient times was a thoroughly wicked sorcerer whose goals were complete control of both men and magic. To these ends, Dir-yabon created a magical scepter that would allow him to take complete control of a person's body, beyond the reach of the victim's mind. With that scepter, Dir-yabon could cripple or slay men — even force any being to take its own life. Over magic, he also had some control. If an item of magical nature was near the scepter, he could use the device to increase the magical item's potency, drawing upon the magic flux about the item and magnifying it to fearful proportions.

"It is the Dark Brotherhood's possession of this malignant relic that brings us to this dire situation. The Brotherhood has used the scepter of Dir-yabon upon the magical residue left in Istaris's body. The body of the mage bore only a small flux of magic, but the power of the relic multiplied that flux. Upon each additional visit to the tomb, the Brotherhood multiplied that power again, until Istaris's corpse is now boiling with vast energies waiting to burst out.

"Also within the crypt, the Brotherhood found a medallion of Istaris, an item in which the mage once stored magical power and spells. This they also intensified, increasing its power until it is now so filled with energy that to evoke its simplest powers would consume the caster.

"This night, the planets will align themselves in such a way as to trigger the magic of the corpse and the medallion, which working together will cause an explosion that will wipe this town from the land. For this, the priests of Hiisi hold our town in ransom. They say that unless we produce 20,000 gold pieces, they will let the magic run its course, and the town will be destroyed. They do not lie; I have cast spells myself and know they speak the truth. Already, homes have been emptied and people flee, knowing that we can never pay such a bounty.

"But now there is hope! You have returned home with increased power and knowledge at your command. I ask you, for the sake of your town, please help us."

You and your party discuss it, but the final decision is obvious. You know you must try to save your town.

Father Verdain breathes a deep sigh. "There is no hope of fighting the Dark Brotherhood directly. Even if we could discover their secret lair, they would easily control you with the power of the scepter and destroy you all. Instead, you must enter the crypt of Istaris at the north edge of town. Once inside, be wary, for it is said that Istaris did not intend his resting place to be disturbed. Many and deadly the traps must be, and caretakers were left behind as guards. Still, you must recover the body of Istaris and his medallion.

"Once you have these, you must take them outside and subject them to flame, thereby destroying the magic therein. I have read all that I can find on this matter from the deepest parts of our libraries, and this should be sufficient. While the dusty scrolls were not clear on this, I believe that you should not try to destroy the corpse or the medallion while inside the crypt, for that is too close to the center of Istaris's magic. The flames could turn magical and consume you all. Now hurry! The two must be destroyed before midnight, or the prayers of Hiisi will be answered, and we will all join Tuoni

in the underworld."

You hurry outside into the early evening and agree that you will need a few things to complete this dangerous task. You split up, and it is just shy of eight o'clock that night when your party meets at the gates of the cemetery.

For the Dungeon Master

Father Verdain, though he will not approach the tomb unless the PCs utterly fail in their mission, is willing to give assistance to the PCs in the form of curative spells if needed.

Father Verdain: AC 4; MV 12"; C9; hp 37; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (mace); S 12, I 16, W 16, D 10, C 9, Ch 15; AL NG; *bracers of defense AC 4, mace +2;* spells: *command, cure light wounds* (×3), *detect evil, detect magic, aid, detect life, know alignment, slow poison* (×2), *speak with animals, cure blindness, cure disease, speak with dead, cure serious wounds, neutralize poison, raise dead.*

The good cleric's research and spell-casting revealed much, but there is more to the story of the death-fearing magic-user. As Istaris saw his years advancing, the wizard began to feel cheated by time. Maybe he had been too devoted to his eldritch pursuits and had not fully enjoyed more earthly pleasures. Maybe he didn't have the time to create the ultimate spell or finish a series of magical tomes. Whatever the case, he was troubled by the nearing of the end of his natural life.

His concerns brought to mind the idea that he needed some place where his spirit might be preserved; if he could continue to function mentally, he could possess some other body and continue his endeavors. So, Istaris began a new line of experiments, producing spells that would preserve his spirit. For such work, he felt he needed a laboratory that would inspire him with an awareness of death's nearing presence. What better place than a cemetery?

Construction started as a small false crypt that would hide stairs leading down to his domain dedicated to the study of death. If he should fail, there would at least be rooms to accommodate his funeral and burial — and these close at hand to remind him of the cost of failure.

It is known that a small, swift river named the Greenbriar divides into two branches a few leagues from town, and that one of the forks passes beneath the earth, from which it does not reappear at all. The townsfolk had always assumed that this branch of the river passed through some natural caverns on its way to an underground sea. As the gods would have it, Istaris's construction broke through into a small section of these caverns, providing him with a water supply in his "palace of death." But that was not all the old mage uncovered, for in the caverns lived a small tribe of troglodytes who watched over a large clump of rock in the underground river. They felt it to be holy ground, having once been stepped on by Laogzed, god of the troglodytes. With them was their holy leader, a troglodyte shaman named Rachgar-zed.

At first, it looked like battle was imminent. But Istaris had spent too much time on his project to abandon it; he tried to make peace with the monsters. Rachgar-zed was not foolish and surmised that something could be gained from this wizard. The shaman suggested that trogs and mage could coexist if Istaris would agree to a few compromises.

Istaris was to turn part of his complex over to the worshipers of Laogzed, including construction of a sanctuary similar to that for human gods and a special place around their holy ground where troglodytes could easily come and worship. In return, the troglodytes would act as caretakers of the place, even after Istaris's demise, and would guard it for generations to come. As this was to be a holy place, the troglodyte families would remain in their current homes, deeper in the caverns, but certain select individuals would be provided with quarters within the sanctuary.

In the end, Istaris did not keep fully to his promise. He distrusted the troglodytes — as they did him — and he treacherously closed off parts of the complex from the troglodytes using magical protection (particularly the statue in room 3). This enraged the reptile-men, because one of the inaccessible areas was their new sanctuary. In their anger, they attempted to defile the wizard's remains but quickly found them too well protected. There was much debate at this point as to whether they should abandon the whole complex, but Rachgar-zed held sway over the troglodytes and eventually convinced them that the areas left to them were still better than the dirty caves in which they had worshiped Laogzed previously.

In recent times, the Dark Brotherhood has entered the crypt looking for magic left by the dead sorcerer. What they found, instead, was an occupied complex with several rooms dedicated to Laogzed and followers determined to assure their sanctity.

The evil humans contrived a story for the troglodytes, telling them that several other humans had discovered the nonhuman presence in the crypt and would arrive in a few weeks to destroy the place. The Dark Brotherhood, however, offered to help the troglodytes in exchange for access to Istaris's burial place. This, they explained, would allow them to tap the power needed to help the troglodytes and also further the causes of their own god. The lizard-beings agreed, but insisted that members of the Brotherhood were not to stay within the complex; they could enter only when they wished to work with Istaris's body.

Over the last four months, the followers of Hiisi visited the crypt a dozen times, performing unholy rites, reciting strange incantations, and using the Scepter of Dir-yabon to leash and control the magic that once belonged to the wizard. They have also placed a few traps of their own to protect their work.

With their efforts complete, the humans delivered a letter to the town council of Hornboro, saying that on the night of the new moon, at exactly midnight, the crypt would explode with enough force to level the entire town and burn all of the farmlands in the surrounding countryside. If the community decided to storm the crypt, the Brotherhood would detonate the spell immediately. To convince the townspeople of the truth of their danger, the Dark Brotherhood marched into town, calling a challenge to the town council. Those members of the council who were present bravely stepped forward to discount the threats. All of these town officials died horribly by their own hands moments later, as the evil humans brought the power of the scepter into force. The remaining crowd, gripped by panic, scattered.

The village's only hope, before the timely return of the traveling adventurers, would be to deliver 20,000 gp before the appointed time to the Brotherhood. For this ransom, the evil humans prom-

ised to disarm and remove the magics that they had cast and leave the town in peace. A ransom of this amount would impoverish the entire population of Hornboro, and there are no guarantees that the Brotherhood will leave as promised.

The Crypt

All rooms in the crypt, unless otherwise noted, have 10′-high ceilings. Walls, floor, and ceilings are constructed of cut and mortared stone, with small cracks between the individual blocks. Only one room (room 34) has any light source; light is not required by any of the crypt's inhabitants. Walls are 1′ thick. Doors are banded with iron and, though wooden, have been treated with chemicals to make them stronger (treat as thick wood +4 on the saving-throw table on page 80 of the DMG). Unless otherwise mentioned, doors are not locked but must be forced open by strength. Most doors are actually double doors, each 3′ wide and 7′ tall, set in a stone wall.

Since this is the hometown of the player characters, it is assumed that they already know the location of the cemetery and are familiar enough with its layout to find the crypt of the legendary wizard without trouble. The Dark Brotherhood has completely abandoned the crypt at this point, anticipating the magical explosion later in the evening, but has left some guardians and traps to discourage intruders.

Upper Level

1. The Crypt. On the surface, the crypt of Istaris looks like a small, white marble mausoleum, simple in design, with a black iron-rod door barring its single entrance. The only markings are large letters carved into the stone above the door, letters which spell "ISTARIS." Peeking through the bars, the PCs can see a white-stone sarcophagus resting on a marble dais. The interior is as unadorned as the exterior. The bars may be bent or the lock on the door picked. Any thief who examines the lock can tell from the number of scratches around the keyhole that it has been recently used. The Dark Brotherhood made entry into the crypt here in the night, using spells and devices to hide their movements.

Once the PCs gain entrance to the tomb, they notice a delicate inscription on the top of the sarcophagus which reads: "To my dear wife, Lindrana, who died of the black plague." This sarcophagus is actually the entrance to the crypt. Opening the coffin releases a gas which causes a loss of 1-6 points of strength three turns later unless a saving throw vs. poison is made. This strength loss is recovered after one hour. All within the crypt are affected.

Once the gas has cleared, a staircase can be seen within the coffin, leading down and east, 50′ into the ground.

2. Anteroom. The stairs end in a small room with disturbing decor. Murals have been painted and etched on the walls, depicting dark-robed priests praying to a faceless god. Screaming men and women are being dragged before the deity. Elsewhere on the walls, human figures are seen suffering terrible deaths in ghastly rituals. The frescoes on the walls are grim indications of where Istaris's mind wandered as his final days approached. The room is otherwise empty, but there is a secret door in the east wall. The door opens with a simple push.

3. Chamber of Directions. A forbidding iron statue stands atop a 2′-high pedestal in the center of this eight-sided room. It is the figure of an angry wizard, 7′ tall, who faces the door to area 2 with obvious condemnation. The right hand points directly at the door; in the other, clenched to his chest, are held two 10″-long wands.

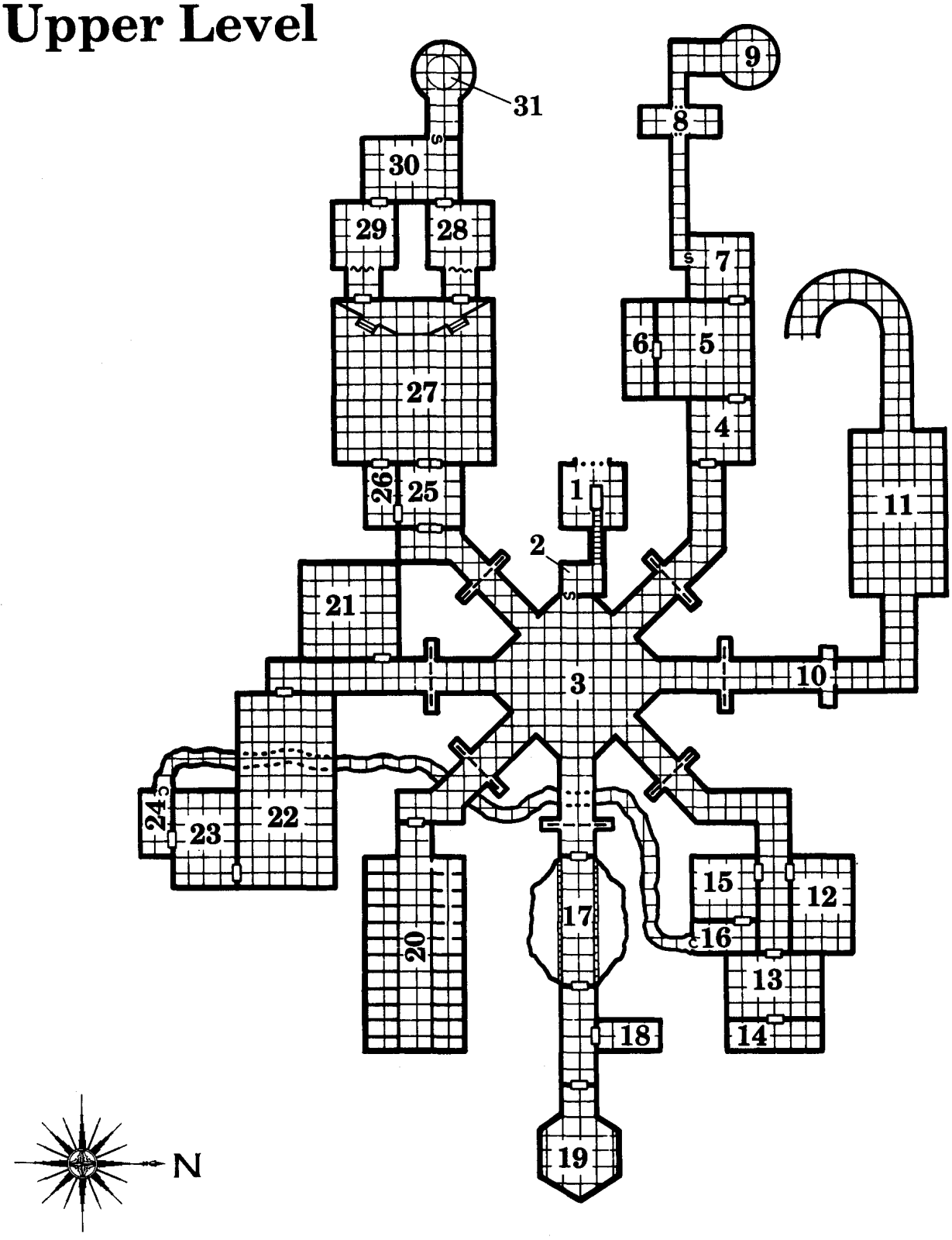
Corridors exit this room from each of its eight walls except the one from which the party entered. This is the central junction of the crypt and is well armed to destroy intruders. If the PCs head down any corridor for at least 10′, a solid stone wall slams down, blocking the path at the 20′ mark (indicated on the map as dashed lines).

If the PCs look back at the statue, they notice that it is now pointing in their direction. The statue can sense whenever any living thing enters one of the corridors (including living beings which are invisible, flying, floating, or traveling on the walls or ceiling). Once such life is detected, the statue spins around to point down that corridor, a wall is lowered to block off the passage, and the statue launches *magic missiles* at the rate of one per round at random characters within the corridor. (If anyone enters from the back of the corridor, however, the wall will not come down until that person is between the statue and the wall slot.) If two or more corridors are entered, the statue fires at PCs at random. This trap is capable of closing all corridors at once if necessary. Only if the PCs leave the corridors and reenter room 3 can the barrage be stopped.

Herein lies the statue's weakness. While the hand points in one direction, an elongated spike on the base of the statue points in the other direction (see diagram 1). Holes have been drilled around the perimeter of the statue's base just below this pointer. If the rods are removed from the statue's other hand and placed in the holes along the statue's base, movement of the pointer is blocked, restricting the statue's movement and freeing one or all of the corridors, depending on how the rods are positioned. If completely blocked, the statue neither fires *magic missiles* nor causes the corridors to be sealed off.

Because of the construction and material of this statue, it is nearly impervious to any physical or magical damage the PCs could deal to it (saves as hard metal +2 on the table on page 80 of the *DMG*). Weapons used to batter or break

THE CRYPT OF ISTARIS
Upper Level



1 square = 5'

the statue are just as likely to break and should have appropriate saving throws rolled vs. normal blow. Only the special rods held by the statue can prevent it from turning on its base. All other objects are too fragile to stop the statue's momentum and are completely destroyed if placed in the holes when the statue turns. The entire right arm of the statue would have to be removed to stop its *magic missile* capability. *Dispel magic* causes the statue to become dormant for one round.

4. Smoking Room. The dimensions of this room are completely undetectable behind a wall of boiling smoke. If the door is left open, the smoke drifts out into the corridor.

This room contains an unending supply of smoke, for on the floor in the middle of the room is an open *eversmoking bottle.* If the party leaves the door open long enough, it soon finds the hallway filling with smoke while the room continues to be obscured. Visibility in this room is zero.

The solution is to find and use the bottle's magical stopper, which has the command word "fumar" inscribed on it. This enchanted cork has been tossed into the northeast corner of the room. Nothing else will stop the bottle from heaving clouds of smoke into the air wherever it goes.

But the bottle is only the first problem. Hidden in the smoke, clinging to the ceiling, is a group of eight **piercers** (AC 3; MV 1"; 1 HD; hp 5 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SA 95% surprise; AL N). Since the smoke is not generated by a heat source, the creatures are able to rely on their heat-detection ability to find characters groping around the room. Each piercer gets one attack, but then requires three rounds to inch its way back up a wall to the ceiling. The piercers are a recent feature, put here by the Dark Brotherhood.

5. Laboratory of Death. Two benches standing in this room are covered with glass tubes, vials, and burners supported by small metal frameworks, giving the room the look of an arcane laboratory. On the west wall is another, smaller, workbench with a white linen cloth draped over it and a small table next to it. In the southwest corner, there is a large panel covered with small round buttons, knobs, and handles. The panel radiates magic.

In this workshop Istaris studied death and its effects, but he never learned to master them. The room is clean, and characters will find no powders or fluids in the beakers and vials. The workbench on the west wall is actually an examining table, and the strange panel once harnessed and controlled magical energy in the laboratory freezer (room 6).

6. Laboratory Freezer. This small room, in which stand four large blocks of ice, is very cold. Each ice block is about 8' tall, 3' wide, and 3' deep; characters may notice that these blocks are very dense in the middle. A closer look reveals a large, dark, humanoid shape in the center of each block. Characters are unable to identify the type of creatures so icily imprisoned.

There are four **ogres** (AC 5; MV 9"; HD 4+1; hp 30, 22, 19, 18; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (currently unarmed) or by fists (2-5/2-5); AL CE) frozen inside these ice blocks. They are left over from some of Istaris's experiments. The characters also notice two matching gold probes stuck in either side of each block, close to the head of the creature. Thin wires run from the probes to holes in the ceiling. If a block is removed from the freezer and thawed, its inhabitant comes to life in 1d6+4 turns (half this time if the characters help by chipping away some of the ice or start a fire). The PCs then find they have unleashed an angry ogre who blames everyone in sight for tricking him into being frozen.

There is a 25% chance to calm an ogre and stop its mindless attack, but it may want to defrost the other ogres as well. Once the ogres have that kind of advantage, there could be trouble (80% chance that the ogres attack right away).

The gold probes are worth 20 gp each, but if they are removed, the ogres wake up and try to break free of the ice (the wiring that kept them unconscious has been disconnected). They completely break out in 1d6+12 turns on their own. The freezing process permits the ogres to survive without oxygen until they are freed.

7. Spell Component Storage. Stacks of shelves fill this room and line the walls, giving the room a maze effect. Bottles and vials of every possible description can be seen as light is cast inside the door. Dried pieces of animals, extra equipment, and sealed flasks of strange gases are just a few of the things found in this room. A few labels are visible, mostly faded and brown with age. Everything here is covered with a thin layer of dust. The spell components for eight randomly determined magic-user or illusionist spells are present in this room, and may all be found within three turns if the PCs search for any treasure.

On a bare spot of wall, in the southwest corner of the room, three gas nozzles are mounted in the stone: one green, one gold, one blue.

If the green nozzle is turned, chlorine gas sprays out to slowly fill the room. Each PC in this area must make a save vs. poison or lose consciousness and take 1-6 hp damage per round that the PC is exposed to the gas. The gas continues to pour out for 10 rounds, filling the room and billowing 10' beyond any open door.

If the blue nozzle is turned, an electric bolt shoots out, doing 3-36 hp damage to a random person within the room unless a save vs. wands is made for half damage.

If the gold nozzle is turned, a section of the wall slides away to expose a secret tunnel (leading to area 8).

8. An Odd Ceiling. A portcullis blocks the path through this chamber, and a second portcullis can be seen on the opposite side of the room where the corridor continues. A *bend bars/lift gates* roll is required to open either of these gates. The walls are otherwise bare.

If the PCs look up with a good light source, they notice another feature of this room: a large hook in the center of the ceiling. If the PCs examine the ceiling more closely, there is a 20% chance to notice that the stonework on the ceiling has a slightly odd tint to it, just a touch of orange or yellow.

This odd coloration is due to this room's previous occupant which, although long dead from starvation, is stuck to the ceiling. It was a lurker above of rectangular shape (10' × 20') that Istaris had surgically altered, cutting a hole in its middle through which the ceiling hook protruded.

If a PC notices something strange about the ceiling and decides to poke at it with a pole or long weapon (or if a thief climbs up to investigate), the lifeless carcass crashes to the floor, revealing the true danger; the surface of the creature that was held to the ceiling is infested with **yellow mold** (AC 9; MV

nil; HD nil; #AT 1 (if touched); Dmg 1-8; SA poisonous spores, save vs. poison or die; *continual light* produces dormancy, fire alone destroys it; AL N). There is a 90% chance that this collapse releases a cloud of spores that fills the room and spills out 10′ into the corridors. If this happens, anyone within range must save vs. poison or die a horrible death as the spores fill his lungs.

If the lurker's fall does not set off the spore cloud, then movement beneath the fallen lurker has a 20% chance per round to do so. Anyone caught beneath the fallen lurker automatically takes 1-8 hp damage from touching the mold.

The hook in the ceiling was used to control an overhead shield (protecting those beneath it from the lurker above) that was removed by Istaris's personal servants shortly before the wizard's demise. Imaginative characters might find some use for the remaining fixture.

9. The Medallion's Room. This small, circular room holds a single item: an iron-bound wooden chest in the middle of the floor. The chest contains what is left of Istaris's wealth: a gold chain (1,400 gp value) attached to the Medallion of Istaris, two chrysoprase gems (50 gp value each), and a scroll with two magic-user spells at 16th level (*affect normal fires, web*).

The medallion in this chest is the true medallion of Istaris (as opposed to the one buried with the body in room 39), which was originally a *medallion of spell storing*. A *detect magic* spell indicates incredibly strong magic of an evocation nature, pulsing as if alive.

10. Gates of Death. The corridor narrows here, passing through an archway. Guarding the portal, squatting on 1′-high pedestals in alcoves on either side, are two life-size iron gargoyles which appear to be reading the inscription above the arch. Their expressions reveal shock, as their eyes and mouths are wide and gaping. The words read: "Fear death, for it will seek you out even as you read these words." The corridor beyond the arch widens to normal width and turns to the left.

If anyone taps on one of the statues and makes a *hear noise* roll (as per thief or the *DMG*, page 60), he finds that the statue is hollow but possibly filled with something — in truth, **green slime** (AC 9; MV nil; HD 2; hp 10 each; #AT nil; SA consumes living creatures in 1-4 rounds, eats wood and metal; SD removed only by burning, freezing, cutting away, or using a *cure disease* spell; AL N). The statues are protected from the slime by thick inner coatings of glass. Any detection for traps has a chance to reveal a thin wire strung across the archway and may also reveal that the two gargoyle statues are hinged at their feet so as to fall forward. They are set off center on their bases, so little effort would be needed for them to drop over. The base platforms rotate and may be turned around.

The tripwire connects to mechanisms which automatically cause the statues to fall forward and disgorge their contents; green slime pours out over the floor and onto the feet of all PCs within 10′ to either side of the gateway. Cutting the tripwire will not trigger the trap, but any push against the statues causes one or both to fall over. No one will be hurt if struck by a falling statue, as they don't have far to fall forward.

If the statues disgorge their cargoes of slime, affected party members have three rounds to remove their boots if they are wearing metallic armor or two rounds for other types of footwear. A dexterity check on 1d20 is made each round. If the check is successful, the shoes have been removed and no further rolls are needed. If any of the allowable checks are missed, the green slime has attached itself to the character's feet, with predictable results.

Even if the tripwire is cut, the statues are dangerous. When any one person in the party enters room 11, the gargoyles tip forward and green slime pours out of their mouths. It takes one round for the statues to empty and tilt back to their original positions. The green slime covers a 10′ × 20′ area as noted above. If the party is in a hurry, it might not notice the change (normal surprise roll if walking, surprised on 1-3 if fleeing pursuit).

The green slime can be avoided if the statues are pivoted on their stands to completely turn them around. With their backs to the corridor, they will not pour out their contents.

11. Statue Chamber. The aisle through this large chamber forms a path between two columns of evil-looking stone statues sculpted by Istaris. The closest two statues look like

sturdy warriors, saluting with their swords. The next two resemble similar fighters, but their armor is battered and the fighters' faces look thin and frightened. The third set of statues depicts another pair of men whose armor is falling to pieces. Several plates are missing from their mail exposing emaciated bodies beneath, the faces showing an image of pain. The fourth pair is hideously contorted, teeth bared in pain, fists clenched, eyes bulging and filled with hate. The last pair look very deformed, with clawlike hands extending from crooked arms.

Istaris had this gallery, showing the transformations of men into manes demons, built as an acknowledgement of his descent into evil. Mounted on the wall, in the southwest corner of the chamber, is a penance box; it is empty.

A magical ward is placed at the entrance to this room from area 10. Anyone crossing the entryway into room 11 triggers the ward (which may be detected as it radiates magic), causing the ward to vanish and the gargoyles in area 10 to tip over (see description of area 10).

The corridor heading west out of room 11 turns into a gently sloping ramp which leads down to room 32 on the second level of this dungeon complex. The slope is roughly 1:3 (it drops 1′ for every 3′ traveled forward). The sounds of a waterfall can be heard as one enters the ramp from area 11 and heads down.

12. Lumber Room. Racks of lumber run from east to west in this crowded room. Storage bins contain extra tools, nails, iron spikes, and small iron hinges and handles. In the southeast corner stands a wooden cabinet with a heavy lock on its doors. This cabinet, when opened, ejects a barrage of 20 thin steel spikes. The first character in line with the front of the cabinet is attacked by each of the spikes (which roll to hit as if hurled by a 4th-level fighter). Any of the projectiles which miss proceed on to attack the next PCs in line. Continue rolling for all characters in the flight path until all the spikes have either hit a target or hit the back wall. Each spike does 1d4 hp damage.

Inside the cabinet are numerous gold and brass fittings (handles, hinges, latches, etc.) for coffins, worth 300 gp and weighing 10 lbs. in all.

13. Dissection Laboratory. The sight in here is disturbing, and the air in this room is foul with old decay. On either side of the door on the opposite side of the room is a high, narrow table draped with a white linen blanket covering something vaguely humanoid. Next to each table is a smaller wooden table with some unhealthy looking tools arranged on top. A large iron door is mounted in the far wall and leads to a storage area (room 14). This was the examining room where Istaris dissected the bodies of creatures that had died during his experiments. But the Dark Brotherhood has left a surprise here.

Any character moving 10′ into the room animates the two **coffer corpses** (AC 8; MV 6″; HD 2; hp 12, 10; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SA automatic strangulation after first successful hit, *fear* generation; SD turned as a wraith, immune to nonmagical weapons although others appear to do damage; AL CE) lying on the examining tables. If these creatures are hit with normal weapons for 6 hp damage or more in a single round, they fall to the ground for one round, then get back up and resume fighting. When these undead reanimate, all characters must save vs. spells or flee in panic. After its first successful hit, a coffer corpse locks its hands around its victim's throat and strangles that person for 1-6 hp damage/round until the corpse is destroyed or the victim dies.

If the tools are examined, PCs find a small saw, hammer, chisels, and a knife; all are stained with old blood. A drawer in the northern tool table holds a wooden box containing 150 gp of recent mintage (stored here by one of the Brotherhood and forgotten until it was too late to retrieve them).

14. Iron Room. The iron doors to this room are hinged so that they open in both directions, but the hinges are so corroded that it is much easier to get in than to get out. It is noticeably cold in this small room. The walls, floor, and ceiling are all made of iron. This place is empty except for an unimportant pile of stained rags in the northeast corner.

The iron doors close automatically if not held open. Anyone locked inside needs to make his *bend bars/lift gates* roll in order to open the doors and escape. Only one roll per individual is allowed per turn; failure indicates that no amount of striving by this person alone will open the door during that turn. Groups of people may add their *bend bars/lift gates* percentages together, but each person must wait 10 minutes between tries (whether as an individual or part of a group).

15. Carpentry Workshop. Sawdust and wood chips are scattered about this room. Hammers, mallets, an adz, and small metal nails lie jumbled around the work table. On top of the table is a half-finished wooden coffin.

If the sawdust is examined, the group finds that the top layer is fresh and that the coffin on the worktable shows signs of recent carving. Nothing else of interest is here.

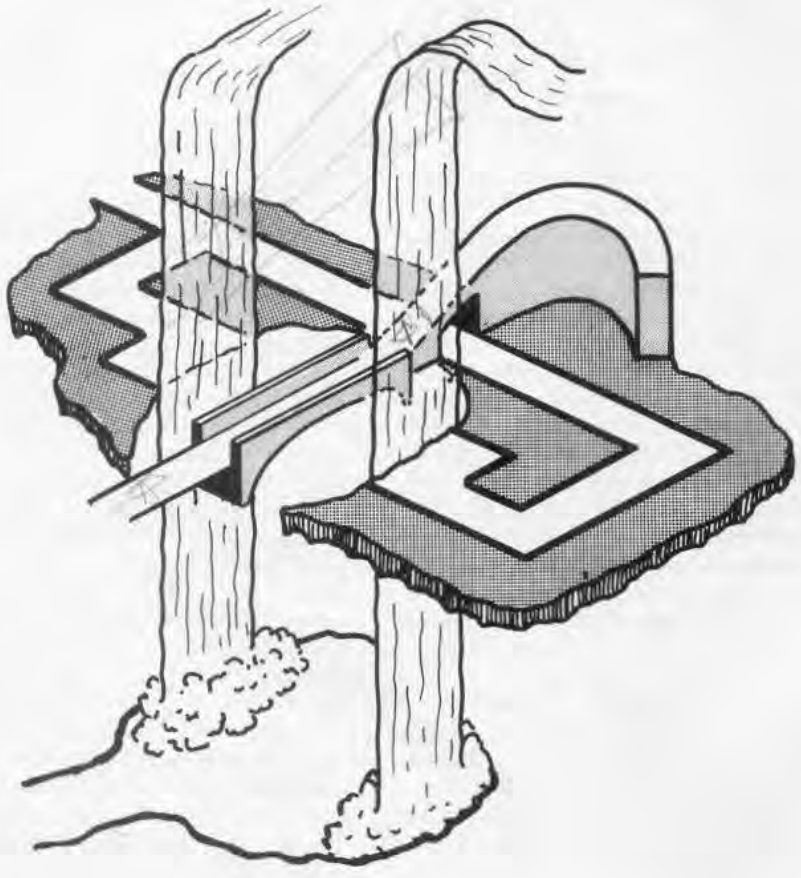
16. Sleeping Chamber. The only furnishings here are a bed and a small table; there is little room for anything else. The bed is unmade, as if someone only recently got up from resting. There is nothing of value here.

If the PCs pull back the covers and examine the bed, they find that the blankets are full of short, black hairs (rat hairs). This room is being used by Mordeus, the accursed and overly curious son of a cabinetmaker in Hornboro. Mordeus is a wererat. His father desperately hides the secret, but also fears the young man and lets him do as he pleases. Because of this, the lycanthrope son roams about town most of the time causing trouble and picking fights. On one of his late-night wanderings, about two weeks ago, Mordeus spotted the Dark Brotherhood in the cemetery. He watched from a safe distance, hidden behind a tombstone, and eventually followed the secretive priests into the crypt of Istaris.

Mordeus lost the clerics' trail at the chamber with Istaris's guardian statue (room 3) while the statue was blocked, but decided to go exploring in a random direction. He became so involved in his own investigation that the Dark Brotherhood left before he could escape. Since his first encounter with the statue in room 3, Mordeus has been afraid to try to leave. He sleeps in this room when tired, but is usually found in the kitchen (room 23) scavenging for food. Out of boredom, he occasionally tinkers around in the workshop (room 15), experimenting with some of the tools he has seen his father use.

A further search of the room reveals a concealed passage behind the head of the bed. The tunnel is rather small (2′ wide, about the right size for a crawling

THE WATERFALL
Area 32



halfling or gnome), close to the floor, and very roughly dug, but Mordeus finds it just right for his purposes. After about 20', the passage slopes downward and winds its way toward the pantry (room 24).

17. Lizard Bridge. The sound of a swift underground river can be heard as soon as the door to this room is opened. The hexagonal room has no floor, and spanning this chasm is a narrow bridge with iron rails on either side. Over the edge there is only blackness — and the sound of rushing water from 60' below.

But the party's attention will be quickly drawn to the occupants of the bridge. Standing on the east end are six **troglodyte sentries** (AC 5; MV 12"; HD 2; hp 14, 9 (x2), 8 (x3); #AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1-3/1-3/2-5 or by weapon type (morning stars); SA revulsion odor; SD hide using chameleon skin, surprise opponents on 1-4; AL CE) guarding the sanctity of the shrine of Laogzed (room 19). They attack with their morning stars if anyone attempts to cross the bridge. None of these creatures speaks Common, so parleying is difficult.

Any combatant pushed or hurled over the railing of the bridge plummets past room 35 (30' below) and into the underground rapids (20' deep and freezing cold), where he is swept along under area 36 to the island at area 37. If still alive, the character may attempt to grab the rocky island and pull himself out of the water (65% chance of success, 85% for troglodytes). If this attempt fails, the character is swept along for about a mile (to drown if without swimming skill or if wearing heavy armor) before the stream takes a sharp turn and dumps the character on a small piece of shoreline inside a cavern. This cavern is very large and opens up to reveal a troglodyte village. (Good luck to anyone who gets this far!) The DM may populate the village for further adventuring. The sudden appearance of a live or dead human at the village may lead to the appearance of a war party of troglodytes (statistics to be determined by the DM) at area 37 in 2-5 hours.

18. Robe Closet. Four golden-yellow velvet robes hang on the west wall, suspended from hooks. Lying on the floor in the northeast corner is a coiled 30'-long rope ladder with hooks attached to one end.

The significance of these robes is explained in the description for room 19. The ladder can be used in room 17. If the hooks are attached to the rails of the bridge there, the bottom of the ladder touches the rails of the lower bridge in room 35.

19. The Moving Idol. This strange hexagonal room contains a bizarre bronze statue of a reptilian humanoid. It stands on its back legs, arms outstretched as if to embrace a victim. This 6'-tall statue stands on a small dais of stone on the east side of the room.

If any character enters 20' into the chamber without wearing a priest's robe from room 18, the **idol** animates and attacks (AC 4; MV 9"; HD 8+2; hp 39; #AT 2; Dmg 1-8/1-8; SD immune to all spells; AL N). The idol will not attack any character who is wearing a robe from room 18. This statue was originally animated by Laogzed, in gratitude for the troglodytes' efforts in the crypt and to improve their ability to make sacrifices.

Beneath the idol is a small latch which is exposed if the statue animates or is knocked off the dais. If this latch is

pulled, a secret door opens in the front face of the dais, exposing a compartment containing two large leather sacks. The sacks, left behind by the troglodytes many years ago, contain 300 ep each.

20. Old Vaults. This long chamber is lined with rotting wooden burial vaults stacked three high from floor to ceiling. All is old and dusty here except the vault to the immediate left, which has a large hole torn through the wooden door. Closer inspection reveals that, although the name plate dedicates the desecrated vault to someone, there is no body within. There is a second hole in the east wall of the interior of the vault.

The destruction continues through the next five vaults, one hole in each of the two interior walls. The invader can be found in the sixth vault: a **carrion crawler** (AC 3/7; MV 12"; HD 3+1; hp 18; #AT 8; Dmg nil; SA paralysis; AL N). If any character of dwarf size or smaller crawls into the fifth vault, he may do automatic damage to the soft flanks of the carrion crawler every round that the party attacks from the front. Party members outside will not be able to strike at the creature's AC 7 body, as only its head sticks out of the wooden vault door (which is unlatched).

The body of Istaris's wife lies in the last vault on the south side. Across her chest is a brass *dagger +1, +2 vs. undead.*

21. Burial Chamber. This musty room is lined with coffins: seven along the west wall and three along the south wall. The floor in here is packed dirt.

This is the room where Istaris buried his faithful servants. If a ranger or barbarian examines the floor, he might notice the recent tracks of Dark Brotherhood members who have cast a few spells in this area as a trap for unwary adventurers. If any of the dead are disturbed, seven **zombies** (AC 8; MV 6"; HD 2; hp 14, 10 (x2), 9 (x3), 7; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SD immune to *sleep, charm, hold,* and cold-based spells; AL N) leave their coffins against the west wall and attack all living beings.

In the northernmost coffin is hidden a magical brass *dagger +1, +2 vs. undead.* Its presence indicates that this servant was very much in favor. If the PCs investigate the other three coffins, it finds that the bodies that did not animate were troglodytes, not humans.

22. Conference Room. A huge oak table runs the length of this room, surrounded by 17 straight-backed chairs. Atop the long table sits a complex, artistic centerpiece composed of heather, branches, and leaves, and displaying stuffed pheasants and quails. The centerpiece is very attractive but it cannot be removed without disintegrating to dust. There is nothing else of importance in this room.

23. Kitchen. Pots and pans hang from the ceiling, dangling over two tables that run down the center of this room. An iron, wood-burning stove stands in the southeast corner. Scuttling noises can be heard all about the room, under scattered heaps of rubbish, under and on top of the tables, and behind the stove. Crouched down in the southwest corner of the room is a **wererat** (AC 6; MV 12"; HD 3+1; hp 14; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SA bite causes lycanthropy; SD can only be hit by magical or silver weapons; AL LE) who is angry at being trapped in here. This lycanthrope is accompanied by eight **giant rats** (AC 7; MV 12"; HD ½; hp 3 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1-3; SA disease; AL NE) who obey him to the death.

The unfortunate lycanthrope is actually Mordeus, the wererat described in room 16. He is currently in his rat form (about the size of a large dog), which was necessary so that he could crawl through the concealed passage from his lair (room 16) to the pantry (room 24). The despair of being imprisoned in the crypt for many days with little hope of escape — and very little food — has driven him to the brink of insanity. Seeing the PCs makes him very hostile and aggressive.

Mordeus's pocket contains a sardonyx gem (50 gp value). There is nothing else in the kitchen except pots, pans, and cooking utensils.

24. Pantry. This tiny room is filled with shelves on every wall, crowded with bottles, jars, and bags of various sizes and shapes. Some of the jars have faded labels that can still be read: flour, sugar, salt, yeast, cinnamon, pepper, etc. The debris of torn sacks and broken ceramic crockery litters the floor.

Underneath the bottom shelf on the west wall is a hole large enough for a halfling, gnome, or an unburdened dwarf to crawl through. This passage-

way leads to the coffin maker's quarters (room 16), now the wererat's room.

In a jar marked "Cookies," set on the highest shelf, PCs can find 200 sp, the cook's rainy-day money. Any food found here is not fit for consumption by humans, elves, dwarves, etc. Rats might feel otherwise.

25. Anteroom. This room has been tiled with colorful ceramic mosaics. Green and yellow are the dominant colors, and most of the patterns give the impression of waves or the ocean. Careful examination reveals a picture on the mosaic. The illustration depicts some sort of half-lizard, half-toad creature wallowing in a deep puddle of slime. This is actually a mosaic of Laogzed, god of the troglodytes.

26. Robing Chamber. The walls and floor of this room are covered with tiny yellow and green ceramic tiles. Along the south wall there is a wooden bench with a small orange robe lying across one end. The robe is the appropriate size for a child (human or otherwise) and does not appear to have been touched in a long time. There is nothing else of importance here.

27. Sanctuary. By the furnishings in this room, the PCs can tell that this is a religious sanctuary. Rotting yellow draperies adorn most of the walls in this room, and the floor is carpeted in a similar color. A raised platform on the west side of this hall is faced by two rows of wooden benches. An aisle runs down the center of these benches making a path toward the platform. In the center of this platform is a wooden podium with two ornately carved doors, one on either side.

On careful inspection, it appears that some kind of symbol was pulled off of the front of the podium. The holy symbol of Laogzed was mounted here at one time, but has now been stolen by the Dark Brotherhood as a souvenir. There is nothing else of interest in this room, but two doors lead into alcoves on the left and right of the platform.

28. Priest's Quarters. As the PCs draw the tattered curtain aside, they see a room that once served as private quarters for one of the priests. A small bed is pushed against the north wall while a desk and chair occupy the northwest corner. There is nothing else of interest in this room.

29. Priest's Quarters. This room is a mirror image of room 28, similar in all respects.

30. Study. Bookshelves line the north, west, and south walls of this small room. A table with two chairs stands in the center, with a rolled scroll on the tabletop. Adventurers won't be examining any books for very long, because if any volume in the room is handled, an **iron cobra** (AC 0; MV 12"; HD 1; hp 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1-3; SA poison bite, attacks from surprise; SD saves as 12th-level magic-user, limited spell and weapon resistance; AL N) crawls out of a compartment located in a lower shelf and attacks the intruders.

If the PCs can keep from destroying this creature and the proper command word can be found, the iron cobra is worth 2,000 gp to most magic-users. There is a 5% chance per turn per searcher (rolled individually, not combined) to find the book that contains the command word ("slither") for the iron cobra. This guardian was originally placed here by Istaris as a gift to the troglodyte priests.

Also built into part of the bottom shelves on the south wall is a locked panel that resembles a liquor cabinet. Inside are six normal wine bottles of various types (including an untouched bottle of a rare orcish spirit, "Ogmar's Finest"). Hidden at the back of this cabinet is a small panel with three large push-buttons: red above white above black. The red button opens the secret door on the west side of the room. The white button raises the elevator from room 40 to room 31. The black button lowers the elevator to room 40. Each time the elevator is activated, there is a chance that someone in the party will hear the faint sound of stone grinding against stone as the elevator moves (as per the thief skill *hear noise* or the *DMG*, page 60).

If this cabinet is smashed open (as opposed to pried or picked), there is a 75% chance that the elevator will not work after being lowered the first time. Investigating this cabinet and pushing the buttons does not trigger the iron cobra; it is activated only if the books are touched.

The parchment scroll on the table contains the following poem: "Palms of flame, lights and smoke, fiery death, hellfire broke." These are actually the command words for the wand that is hidden with Istaris's body.

The collection of books here consists mostly of troglodyte prayer and psalm books. While the text is incomprehensible to most characters, the grotesque pictures of Laogzed's worship rites should be enough to inform them of the nature of these tomes.

31. Upper Elevator Room. There are two possible situations in this room depending on the PCs' actions in room 30. If the elevator is raised, the short corridor behind the secret door leads to a circular room with very smooth walls. A small crack, barely visible, traces a 10'-diameter circle in the center of the floor. If the elevator is lowered, a 10'-diameter hole in the center of the floor reveals another circular room 30' below (room 40). The room is otherwise featureless.

Lower Level

32. Waterfall Bridge. The roar of twin waterfalls drowns out all other sounds in this strange corridor. Instead of cut stone walls, barriers of water, formed by 10'-high waterfalls on either side of the hall, border the path for about 40'. The floor glistens with misty spray. The falls drop another 20' past the bridge into a 10'-deep pool, which spills out into a river that drops another 10' by the time it reaches area 35, then evens out for a long underground run.

The areas on the map behind the waterfalls can be reached by leaping through the curtains of water (but PCs must make a dexterity check on 1d20 to cross the 3' gap or else fall down to the pool below). Each of these areas behind the falls can also be reached via a corridor that enters from the rear.

Guarding the bridge from behind the falls is a band of eight troglodytes (hp 12, 11, 10 (x4), 8, 7; see area 17 for complete statistics). These troglodytes leap through the water and onto the bridge to attack as soon as the party reaches the midpoint of the span. Immediately after the first round of combat, they are joined by their 3rd-level **troglodyte shaman** (AC 5; MV 12"; fights as 4 HD monster; hp 18; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (morning star); S 18, see other data at area 17; AL CE; spells: *cause light wounds, darkness, protection from good*). These guards gain surprise (even if the PCs are using a light source) on a roll of 1-5 on 1d6, as the water covers their movements and sounds. The bridge has no railings and the floor is slick, but the troglodytes have great skill at jumping across the gaps to the bridge (only 5% chance of falling per jump, with the troglodyte eventually being washed up alive at the village mentioned at area 17).

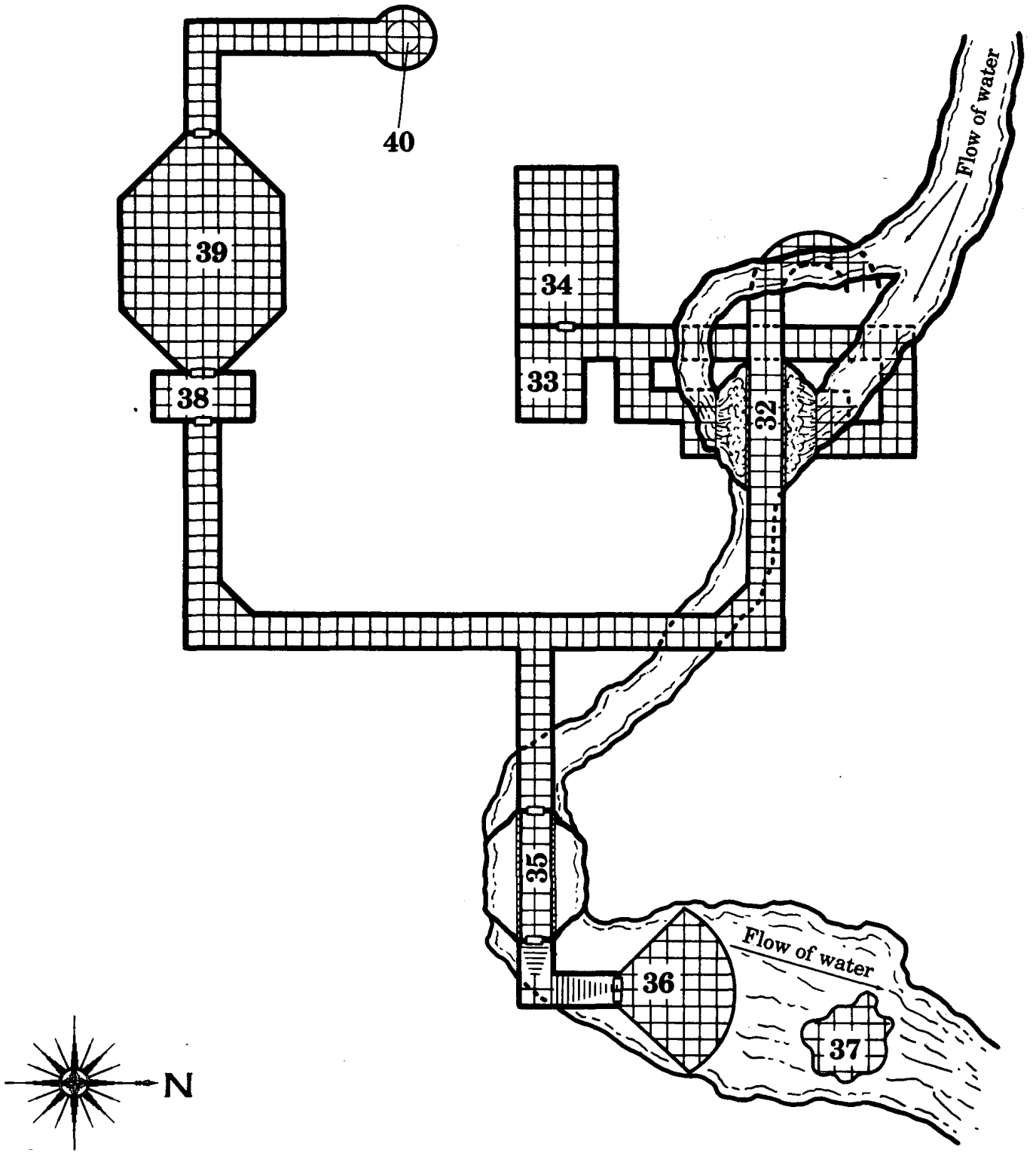
These are the descendants of Istaris's guards, who were supported by him while he lived. Now that the wizard is dead, they still hold this place as their holy sanctuary. They fight with morning stars and immediately attack with their revulsion odor. The only treasure to be found in this area is the headband adorning the shaman. It is leather set with a poorly cut topaz (200 gp value).

33. Troll's Room. This room contains a broken table along the south wall and a very large bed in the northwest corner. The bed is obviously too big for a troglodyte, for it belongs to Uzglut, the troll who lives with the troglodytes (see area 36 for information on Uzglut). The condition of the table is the result of one of his temper tantrums.

34. Guards' Room. Four torches burn dimly about this large room,

THE CRYPT OF ISTARIS
Lower Level

1 square = 5'



revealing nine crude leather beds: four along the north wall and five along the south wall. Each bed has a small chest placed at its foot. In the remaining space along the north wall, on the far side of the room, sits a small stone altar. Atop it stands a small statue of green stone (possibly jade), made in the image of Laogzed.

The beds are used by whichever guards are currently off-duty. Only the bed in the southwest corner is permanently assigned; it belongs to the troglodyte shaman. The altar across the room is dedicated to Laogzed, as evidenced by the small statue of the god sitting on top. While the idol is of good quality, the material is actually serpentine (an ornamental stone commonly found in the underground river) and is worth only 20 gp. The chests contain old rags, pieces of weapons or enemies, and 2-20 ep each (taken from the temple above, area 27). The shaman's trunk also holds an extra iron holy symbol of Laogzed.

35. Lower Bridge. The sound of rushing water is very loud here as the underground river is 30′ below it. The cavern is basically hexagonal, but the floor is only a narrow bridge with metal rails supporting either side. If the PCs have already been in room 17, they will find this room quite familiar. In fact, they are now directly below room 17.

This bridge is supposed to be guarded by Uzglut the troll, but he has wandered from his duties to the pier (area 36) and has left the door on the east side of the bridge ajar. If the PCs begin yelling and screaming, they might (30% chance) attract his attention over the noise of the river. Otherwise, he won't hear them. The corridor heading east toward area 36 drops 30′ down a series of stairs, with one landing in the middle.

36. The River Dock. A pair of ornate teak doors open out to an arc-shaped stone pier jutting into the darkness. The sound of crashing rapids can be heard ahead. Looking beyond the pier, the area seems to be a natural cavern formed by the work of rushing water. Light reveals that the dock juts out over the river; the dock is supported on heavy stone struts just 1′ above the surface of the 10′-deep river. A number of leathery ropes, each 70-100′ long, lie in piles around the dock; each is attached to an iron bar set into the rock (see area 37 for details).

There at the dock is **Uzglut the troll** (AC 4; MV 12″; HD 6+6; hp 38; #AT 3; Dmg 5-8/5-8/2-12; SA attacks three targets at once; SD regeneration; AL CE). He is standing at the rail of the pier, looking out over the surging, dark water. Light shining onto the pier instantly attracts Uzglut's attention and brings the party face-to-face with the 9′-tall troll. Uzglut is a ferocious creature even when in one of his better moods, and he will not hesitate to attack the adventurers (or any creature other than a troglodyte).

Uzglut is an adopted member of the troglodyte village. He was washed down the Greenbriar River during a flood two months prior to this adventure. Battered and tired, he did not even have the energy to eat the troglodytes. The relationship was touchy at this point, but the troglodyte chieftain saw the benefit of befriending such a creature. So, food was brought out and Uzglut was welcomed into the tribe. He has never fit in well, but he has become aware, after several attempts, that he doesn't know how to get back to the surface world. Besides, now he eats regularly and doesn't have to hunt to survive. Still, the beast in him surfaces now and then, and he erupts into a fury of anger. The troglodytes learned this painfully enough and now put Uzglut on lone guard duty in various parts of the complex. Uzglut has nothing of value, as he wouldn't know treasure if it bit him.

If the PCs stand at the rail of the pier, the DM should describe the island rock (area 37) to the PCs.

37. Laogzed's Island. From the railing, the water can be seen clearly, for its dark rapids rush from beneath the pier, past a large chunk of rock poking out of the stream, and disappear through a large hole in the north end of the cavern. The chunk of rock glistens and shines with precious metals and water spray. The PCs can see what seems to be a hole or large depression on top of the rock, hard to distinguish in the shadows of the cavern.

If the PCs dive into the water and try to swim to the island, they have an 80% chance of success. But movement on the island attracts its occupant: a **giant lizard** (AC 5; MV 15″; HD 3+1; hp 18; #AT 1 bite; Dmg 1-8; SA double damage on roll of 20; AL N) which crawls out of the small cave atop the island and attacks. This lizard can also swim quite well and pursues prey as far as the pier. When swimming, it attacks at −2 to hit. The lizard won't bother troglodytes (they taste bad).

The metal seen from the pier is actually scattered coins, the inedible remains of the troglodytes' offerings to their god's representative; there are 98 sp to be found here. Smaller characters could crawl into the lizard's lair, but they would find nothing but droppings and crushed bones from past meals.

Anyone on the island with a strong light source (*continual light* or better) has a 25% chance per round to notice the low ledge on the west side of the river's cavern. Just high enough for a crawling man to move safely along, the ledge has served as the main pathway for troglodytes coming from or going to their village (see area 17) farther down in the caverns. The troglodytes are hauled to the dock at area 36 by either the troll or other troglodytes using the ropes on the dock. A check is made every few hours by the guards of the crypt for any new arrivals.

38. Anteroom. The only obvious feature of this room is a set of richly carved and engraved double doors with large brass handles and inlays of precious woods. Otherwise, there is nothing of interest here. Anyone with tracking skill will notice that, although the dried footprints of reptilian beings (the troglodytes) come up to this room's doorway, none have ever passed through into room 38 or beyond.

39. Istaris's Tomb. Only a place as majestic as this could house the body of the once-great wizard. Numerous paintings of banner-wielding soldiers and undead adorn the walls, while a large, carved white-and-black marble dais supports a highly decorated coffin in the center of the room. The dais is surrounded by four grinning gargoyles, wings folded, facing the resting place. Each of the gargoyles is watched by another statue standing in the north and south corners of the room, but these other statues appear melted, as if exposed to great heat. Only their bone-white claws and grinning, demonic faces can be discerned.

A wizard of Istaris's caliber does not leave his tomb unguarded. Any character entering 20′ into the chamber causes the four **gargoyles** (AC 5; MV 9″/15″;

HD 4+4; hp 24, 21, 19, 17; #AT 4; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6/1-4; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; AL CE) to become flesh, animate, and attack to defend the coffin. The ceiling in this room is high enough (25' in the center) to allow limited flight.

The second set of statues remains motionless unless one is touched or all of the gargoyles are dispatched. At that point, these figures of four **lemure devils** (AC 7; MV 3"; HD 3; hp 22, 18, 13, 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1-3; SD silver or magical weapons to hit, regenerate 1 hp/round, permanently killed only by holy items; limited spell immunity; AL LE) animate and fight the PCs.

The gargoyles do not pursue characters, but the lemures will. On the other hand, the gargoyles use their flying ability to its best advantage.

The coffin itself is *fire trapped.* Anyone within 5' of the coffin when its lid is raised suffers 1d4+10 hp damage (unless a save vs. spells is made for half damage) if the trap is not successfully removed first. There is only half the normal chance to detect such a trap.

Buried with the body is a potion (*extra healing*), a wand (*wand of fire,* 22 charges, command words are in room 30), and an exact replica of the Medallion of Istaris (700 gp value). This medallion does not radiate magic; this could be the only clue the PCs have that this medallion is a fake. Istaris's skeletal body, wearing its rotting robes and clutching the wand and potion bottle in its crossed arms, strongly resembles the body of a lich. It radiates an incredible amount of magical power in an unstable pattern, noticeable if a *detect magic* spell or the like is used on it.

As explained earlier, failure to retrieve and destroy both Istaris's body and the authentic medallion (hidden in room 9) means that the crypt explodes at midnight and destroys much of the surrounding area. If only the body or only the medallion is destroyed, the crypt still explodes but the blast radius is greatly reduced.

40. Lower Elevator Room. The description of this room varies, depending on whether the elevator is raised or lowered when the PCs enter. The location of the elevator depends on the PCs' actions in room 30. If the adventurers have not been to room 30, the elevator is in its raised position.

If the elevator is raised, the corridor leads to a small circular chamber, most of which is filled with a large, smooth stone column. The walls in this room are also noticeably smoother than in other places, showing no seams between the cut blocks of stone (a result of careful workmanship and nothing else).

If the elevator is lowered, there is a 10'-diameter hole in the ceiling through which can be seen an upper level chamber. The only other feature of this room is a circle etched into the floor directly below the hole.

Ending the Adventure

If, during tournament play, the PCs use up too much of their time searching for the crypt, sleeping, eating, or with other time-consuming tasks, the DM should deduct this from the four hours available. If the four hours expire, the DM should announce that the crypt has exploded and that the adventurers been destroyed.

Eliminating either the body or the medallion decreases the power of the explosion considerably. If only one of the items remains, the destruction is limited to the crypt, its inhabitants, and the cemetery grounds; Hornboro will be safe. The PCs, being unaware of this, should continue their search. Even the reduced explosion is enough to kill the adventurers if they are still inside the blast area.

The destruction of the body, the medallion, or both releases a great deal of volatile magical flux. This should be described to the players as a swirling mass of green, blue, and purple vapor, cascading and pooling almost like liquid. An occasional flash of dim, colored light can be seen within the depths of these mists. This magical flux floats about close to the ground without evident purpose. But at the stroke of midnight, things begin to move. On this particular night, the planets are to align and set off the detonation. If the magical flux has been released, that part of the spell is then ruined. As the planets align, the loose flux is suddenly drawn to the item that called it into existence on this plane: the scepter of Dir-yabon. This massive surge of power, when it reaches the relic, causes a huge overload that destroys the scepter with considerable force. All members of the Dark Brotherhood within 100 yards of the relic are instantly killed, and the Brotherhood ceases to exist with the destruction of its symbol of power.

During this time, the PCs witness the sudden coagulation of the magical flux, see this cloud hurl itself north toward the hills near Hornboro, then spot a blinding flash of violet light deep within the hills, the location of the evil priests' secret hideaway. Any investigation of this area in regular campaign play should reveal little other than the blasted ground and a few mortal remains, though one or two cult members may have been far enough away from the blast to survive.

Although the PCs have information to the contrary, it is perfectly safe to burn the body, the medallion, or both within the confines of the crypt. Father Verdain's information is incorrect. Only the destruction of these items matters.

Tournament Scoring

Main Objectives

+100 points for recovering Istaris's body in room 39.

+100 points for recovering Istaris's medallion in room 9.

+50 points for destroying both items outside the crypt.

Level 1

+10 points for leaving only one corridor open in the Chamber of Directions, room 3.

+10 points for recovering the *ever-smoking bottle* (with stopper), room 4.

−10 points for destroying the *ever-smoking bottle* in room 4.

−10 points for bringing down the dead lurker above in room 8.

+10 points for turning the gargoyles in the Gates of Death, room 10.

−10 points for knocking over the gargoyles in the Gates of Death.

−5 points for every character locked in the supply room, room 14.

Level 2

+5 points if the PCs use the ladder from room 18 on the Lizard Bridge, room 17.

+10 points if the PCs use the priests' elevator, room 31.

−5 points for swimming to the island rock (37) from the River Dock, area 36.

Final condition of the party

+1 point for every hit point remaining at the end of the adventure (total of all party members).

−5 points for each dead PC. Ω

THE DJINNI'S RING

BY VINCE GARCIA

A djinni in need can be trouble, indeed.

Artwork by Daniel R. Horne

Vince Garcia's 20-year dream of salvaging the Titanic *was recently crushed. Nevertheless, he continues to send in module proposals and is a frequent contributor to* DRAGON® *Magazine. Vince is designing the thief, assassin, and merchant guilds for the Living City in* POLYHEDRON™, *the magazine of the Role-Playing Game Association™ Network. In his spare time, Vince's main interests in life are Stevie Nicks, Jan and Dean, and Victoria Principal. Look for more of his work in* DUNGEON™ *Adventures soon.*

"The Djinni's Ring" is a Basic D&D® scenario for a single player taking the role of Moonstone, a 3rd-level elf caught up in an Arabian Nights adventure. This module is presented in a format new to DUNGEON Adventures — no Dungeon Master required! The text directs you through numbered sections based on Moonstone's actions and the results of combat. It is also possible to use one of your own D&D characters, or even an AD&D® fighter/magic-user, but there may be some conflict between the actions your character attempts and the choices given. If so, use your own good judgment to determine the results in each situation, and follow the paths of success or failure as Moonstone would.

At times your character will be called upon to test a characteristic such as Strength or Dexterity to determine success in a particular task. To do so, roll three six-sided dice (3d6); a score equal to or less than the characteristic indicates success.

When an initiative roll is called for in combat, roll one six-sided die (1d6) for each side in the fight; the side rolling the higher number attacks first.

To determine whether you hit your foe, roll a 20-sided die (1d20). If the total is equal to or higher than the roll required to hit the monster (as listed in the text), your blow connects. Now roll one six-sided die and add 1 point (1d6 + 1) to see how many points of damage you have inflicted. Deduct this number from the total hit points listed for the monster. When the creature's hit points reach zero, you have killed it!

The monster, of course, is also attacking you. Roll attacks alternately after the first initiative roll, and deduct any damage inflicted on you from your total. If your hit points reach zero . . . well, you can always start again and try a different path.

Saving Throws are made by rolling a 20-sided die (1d20). A throw is successful if it is equal to or above the number for that type of Saving Throw on Moonstone's character sheet.

Keep a separate tally of any damage taken as a result of poison, disease, or heat exposure. Opportunities may arise to heal these types of injuries in this adventure.

Most adjustments for ability scores have been already been added to Moonstone's statistics or otherwise taken into account in this adventure, but don't forget to add 1 point to the elf's damage rolls to reflect above average Strength.

Adventure Background

Nearly two years ago, you left your home in the Canolbarth Forest and joined a party of adventurers to seek your fortune. For a time, there was much adventure to be had within the Grand Duchy of Karameikos, but the discovery of a treasure map eventually led your group to the deserts of the far-away Emirates of Ylaruam, where adventuring was much different from back home.

The harsh, merciless environment was like nothing you had ever experienced, and soon you longed for home. When the opportunity presented itself, you explained your feelings to your friends and bid them farewell. Refusing to take a magical sword offered you because the party had greater need of it, you asked for nothing more than money enough to get home — and a bandit chieftain's moonstone ring fashioned in the shape of a cobra.

After many days of travel across the hot sands, you began the long sea journey home, eventually landing in the port of Serendib, one of the cities of the Minrothad Guilds. With a three-day wait until the next vessel sailed for the city of Specularum, you paid for lodgings in one of the city's better inns. Wearied from the long, restless voyage, you stored most of your gear in a closet and collapsed into bed, falling deeply asleep.

With a start, you awake, certain that someone has called your name. Grasping the hilt of the silver dagger you always keep beneath your pillow, you turn to see who has entered your room. The entire chamber is bathed in the silvery light of the full moon gleaming through an open window, yet no one is visible. Then your name is called again, and you realize it comes from your ring, which emits a ghostly white glimmering in the moon's radiance.

"Who are you?" you ask in surprise.

"I am Rafii," comes the soft answer, "a djinni whose soul was long ago divided and bound into two rings by Abu Iblis, master of dark sorceries. For years, he forced me to obey his commands, until his enemies at last ended his reign of evil by sealing him alive within a chamber of his ivory palace far away in the great desert. In the battle, his right hand — and the ring you now wear — was sundered from him, and I fell to a succession of owners until you took me from the bandits.

"Because I sense you are one of good heart, I have revealed my existence to you, to beg your help in setting me free. If you are willing, I can take you to Abu Iblis's palace. There you could free me by finding the chamber in which Abu Iblis died, joining the two rings, and reuniting me with my other half.

"I will not lie to you, and I warn you that the palace may yet be guarded by the remnants of his evil sorceries. But while there may be great danger, there may also be great reward for you if you succeed in your quest. I have thus revealed my secret, which I have kept from all the others who have owned me — those who did evil or were selfish or too faint of heart to aid me.

"And I would tell you last of all that, because I am separated from the other half of my soul, my powers are weak and may be used only during the times of full moon. Even so, I am empowered to aid you one time if you call upon me — but do so wisely, for the cost to both of us could be great. Will you now aid this unwilling slave to be set free?"

Go to **1.**

1

"I don't care about any reward," you reply. "I wouldn't want to be a slave, bound in a ring. I'm willing to help you, but are you certain I can do the job? And how will I find the room that holds the other half of the ring?"

"Your courage alone is a great weapon," the ring replies. "Use it together with wisdom, and no enemy will prevail over you. As to the chamber holding my other self, I am blinded to its location. I know only that it lies within the palace where I shall take you. Now hurry! My power weakens with the dawn, and we have far to go before then. Step onto the carpet lying before your bed."

Looking down at the foot of the bed, you see a carpet some 6′ long and 4′ wide. If you obey the djinni and immediately step onto the carpet, go to **10.** If you get dressed first and retrieve your equipment, go to **13.**

Moonstone
3rd-level Lawful Elf

S	I	W	D	C	Ch
13	16	14	16	13	14

Saving Throws:

Death Ray or Poison:	12
Magic Wands:	13
Paralysis or Turn to Stone:	13
Dragon Breath:	15
Rods or Staves:	15
Spells:	14

Armor Class: 5 (leather armor)
Hit points: 15
Chance to find secret or concealed doors: 1 or 2 on 1d6

Weapons:
Normal sword (Dmg 1-8), silver dagger (Dmg 1-4), short bow and quiver with 10 arrows (Dmg 1-6).

Equipment:
Leather armor, backpack, flask of oil, mirror, one week's iron rations, two full waterskins, 50′ rope with grappling hook, three small sacks, 12 iron spikes, a small hammer, tinder box, two torches, spare tunic and boots, spare dagger, spell book.

Valuables:
Moonstone ring valued at 500 gp; purse containing 30 pp, 15 gp, 12 sp.

Spells: Two first-level spells and one second-level spell from the spell book below. Choose wisely. Moonstone may not have the opportunity to change these spells during the course of the adventure.

Spell book:
First Level Spells: *Detect magic, magic missile, read languages, read magic, sleep.*
Second-level spells: *knock, levitate, mirror image, web.*

2

As you near the city, it becomes clear that once many people must have lived here, for there are remains of quite a few structures, although most of the smaller buildings have fallen to rubble from the long period of neglect. While passage is somewhat difficult as most streets are filled with rubble, the wide stone avenue you are now approaching extends almost unobstructed to the intact pyramid.

If you want to explore the areas of rubble, go to **28.** If you would rather explore the area around the pyramid, go to **16.** If you turn around and walk east in the direction the carpet was last heading, go to **6.**

3

You're not going to risk life and limb on anything that's not directly related to the quest — the city's probably haunted anyway! The carpet, meanwhile, continues on toward the rising sun, and eventually heads downward, landing upon a sand dune.

"We are here," comes Rafii's voice. "The palace lies beyond this mountain of sand. With the dawn, I weaken and can give you little aid. If you find the chamber containing my other self, place the rings together and command my release, and I shall be freed. But be wise — the enchantments yet protecting the palace may prove deadly. Proceed cautiously, and may fortune smile upon our quest."

Go to **40.**

4

Curiosity has always been one of your traits, and this is too good an opportunity to miss. If you climb the rope hanging down from the opening, go to **34.** If you prefer to use your own rope and grapple, go to **12.** If you have memorized a *levitate* spell and wish to use it, go to **42.**

5

The gallery leads you 30′ into the pyramid before you discover it has been sealed off with gigantic blocks of limestone weighing many tons. But to the side, a small passage has been chiseled away. Squeezing through and upward, you discover another gallery, the floor of which must be the tops of the limestone blocks preventing passage from below. You continue on for about 100′ until you reach a dead end where another tight passage leads down, presumably beyond the obstruction. You have a very uncomfortable feeling.

If you wish to continue exploring, go to **18.** If you decide that whatever evil doubtlessly awaits can go on waiting while you leave the pyramid, go to **25.**

6

You begin what you hope will not be too long a walk, for the sun is rapidly becoming unbearable. Check your Intelligence. If the roll is successful, go to **40.** Otherwise, go to **23.**

7

You find yourself looking at a giant scorpion behind a mound of rubble. It notices you and begins to approach, pincers clacking and needle-sharp tail quivering.

If you draw your sword and fight, go to **11.** If you prefer to cast a *sleep* spell, go to **17.** If you'd rather cast a *mirror image* spell and attack, go to **15.** Or, if you call on Rafii for aid, go to **19.**

8

You swing your trusty blade in the mummy's face, but your blows glance impotently off the supernaturally powerful creature. If you now use your torch against the mummy, go to **43.** If you have picked up the glowing sword and try it against the foul monster, go to **26.** Or maybe you should call on Rafii for aid (go to **19**).

9

The scorpion swarms at you with its pincers and deadly tail. Dodging as best you can, you make several lunges at it, each failing to penetrate the creature's thick body armor. Then, at last, you discover a soft spot in the chitin and, making a perfectly timed lunge, you thrust your sword upward through its jaw and into the brain cavity.

For a moment, the monster stares at you with unseeing eyes. Then it falls to the ground with a thud. You prod it with the toe of your boot to satisfy yourself that it is quite dead, then proceed to search the area.

Your scrutiny reveals no treasure of any sort. If you now choose to explore near the pyramid, go to **16.** If you think it's time to leave the city and head east, go to **6.**

10

Swiftly, the carpet rises and floats out the window. "I hope you know that I don't have any of my gear," you call out while grasping tightly to the edges of the rug.

The djinni in the ring chuckles. "You didn't think I would ask you to face Abu Iblis's palace in your nightclothes, I hope? Look back."

Glancing behind, you notice your pack and the rest of your gear floating in mid-air. Keeping one hand tightly secured to the carpet, you snag everything and start to dress.

"Remember," Rafii warns, "my powers weaken with the coming of dawn, but I can aid you one time. May your quest be successful for us both."

Go to **31.**

11

You realize that this is a fearsome foe, but your sword arm has never failed you yet. Roll for initiative and begin combat. The scorpion needs an 11 to hit you. It makes two attacks with its pincers for 1-10 hit points damage each, along with 1-4 hit points damage from its stinging tail. If you are stung, you must make a Saving Throw vs. Poison or take 8 additional hit points of damage. You need to roll 16 or higher to hit the scorpion, which has 16 hit points.

If you kill the scorpion, go to **9.** If the scorpion kills you, go to **108.** If the fight looks hopeless and you decide to call on Rafii for help, go to **19.**

12

Check your Dexterity to snag the grapple on a secure anchorage. If you succeed, go to **42.** If your Dexterity fails you, try the hanging rope (go to **34**), use a *levitate* spell (go to **42**), or give up and head eastward (go to **6**).

13

"First things first," you answer. "It wouldn't do to go on an adventure in my nightclothes with nothing more than a dagger! You'll have to wait a minute." After dressing and hurriedly grabbing your things, you jump aboard and barely have time to toss a platinum piece onto the bed to cover the carpet's cost as you lift up from the floor and begin moving out the window.

"At least you could have waited for me to put my boots on," you exclaim, peering down upon the darkened city.

"There is no time to waste," the djinni answers. "Before the dawn comes and my powers wane, I want to make sure you arrive safely at Abu Iblis's ivory

palace. But at worst, I shall at least get you near it."

Go to **20.**

14

The hieroglyphics read, "The hand of death be upon those who disturb the sleep of the entombed." Go back to **37** and decide what to do next.

15

Several mirror images of yourself appear, confusing the scorpion so that you may make two free attacks before rolling initiative. Go to **11** and conduct combat.

16

As you draw near the pyramid, you discover something interesting. An opening exists halfway up the structure, from which hangs an old rope. The bones of a few camels lie on the ground below the pyramid, where they apparently were securely tethered and then abandoned.

If you try to find a way up the pyramid, go to **4.** If you'd rather leave the city and head east, go to **6.**

17

With the calm you've learned from hard experience, you intone a droning series of syllables even as the scorpion advances toward you. Then, just as it rears up to strike, the creature sinks downward into the sand and lies still. Quickly, you bury your sword in its head. After satisfying yourself that the scorpion is quite dead, you search the area but find no treasure. If you choose to explore near the pyramid, go to **16.** If you decide to leave the city, go to **6.**

18

Nervously, you creep down, coming out before a large copper doorway with many strange hieroglyphs and symbols etched into its surface. Three wax seals upon the door have been broken, and a rope binding the double door handles has been cut and tossed aside.

Prepared for danger, you pull one of the handles and the door pivots open. In the torchlight, you see the remains of four tomb robbers spread around a stone sarcophagus at the chamber's center. Next to the doorway lies a glowing sword.

If you go in and search the bodies, go to **32.** If you retrieve the sword and depart, go to **27.** If you decide to examine the sarcophagus, go to **37.**

19

Instantly, a whirlwind engulfs you, carrying you out of the city and high into the sky. Over the desert you sail until you are deposited before what is obviously Abu Iblis's ivory palace.

"You should have avoided the city," Rafii's feeble voice speaks. "I am greatly weakened now, and I fear my strength will not return until I am reunited with my other self. I can do no more now than wish you luck. When you find the other portion of the ring, place the two together and command my release. Then I shall be free."

With that, Rafii's voice fades away, leaving you alone. Go to **40.**

20

You fly all night on the carpet, crossing the sea and penetrating deep into the deserts you so eagerly departed just a few days ago. Then, as dawn starts to break ahead of you, the carpet begins to shake and quickly loses altitude. Holding on for dear life, you are unceremoniously dumped on top of a sand dune.

While shaking the sand from your clothes, you notice the remnants of an ancient city below you. There is no sign of any ivory palace, but at the center of the city lies an intact pyramid amid the ruins of what may have been temples.

If you decide to explore the city go to **2.** If you start walking eastward, the direction the carpet was flying before it crashed, go to **6.**

21

With a grating sound, the lid begins to slide away. Then, to your horror, a bandaged hand reaches out from the coffin and grabs hold of your arm. Make a Saving Throw vs. Paralysis. If you fail, you are paralyzed with fear for one round, allowing the mummy to attack first. If your Saving Throw is successful, roll initiative and conduct combat.

The mummy needs a 9 to hit you, and makes a single attack per round which does 1-12 hit points damage. In addition, a successful attack transmits a disease which prevents your wounds from being magically healed. You must roll 15 or higher to hit the mummy. It has 15 hit points.

If you attack with your own sword, go to **8.** If you have the glowing sword, go to **26.** If you swing your torch at the

mummy, go to **43.** If you call on Rafii for aid, go to **19.**

22

Inside the sarcophagus you discover a golden headband fashioned — like your ring — in the shape of a cobra. A copper scepter capped by a golden eagle lies on a mouldering pillow. As you grasp the scepter, knowledge comes to you that it holds several clerical spells which you may cast at your desire (remember to cross off each one after it is cast):

Resist fire
Snake charm
Cure serious wounds (heals 2d6 + 2 hit points damage)
Striking (You may cast this spell on a weapon of your choice prior to any combat. For five rounds of combat, the weapon will do an additional 1-6 hit points damage on each successful hit. The spell duration expires after one hour).

Go to **25.**

23

Unlike the forest, there are no mossy trees here to help you tell the direction you're heading, and soon you begin to stray. The heat is made bearable only

by sipping water as you trudge along, but you soon realize you have been drinking too much. Cross one waterskin off your list. If you have no more water, take 2 hit points damage from exposure. If your hit points fall to zero or lower, go to **108.** If you still survive, go back to **6** and check your Intelligence again.

24

The carpet obeys your command to land and gently sets down on the outskirts of an ancient city abandoned perhaps for centuries. Most of the buildings are now rubble, yet at the center of the city rises an intact pyramid.

If you want to explore the city, go to **2.** If you think it is better to forget the city and fly on, go to **29.**

25

You make it back to the outside without incident. It is now early afternoon, and you pause to take a drink of water before fastening your grappling hook and descending. Evidently, you've been sipping without noticing, for the waterskin is now empty. Cross it off your list, leaving you a single waterskin. You free your grapple with a flick of your wrist, coil your rope, and begin walking east, the last direction the carpet was heading. Go to **6.**

26

The sword does half damage against the creature, with a +1 bonus to hit and to damage. If you kill the mummy, go to **46.** If the mummy kills you, go to **108.** If you wish to call on Rafii's aid, go to **19.**

27

Through the glow, you can see that the sword is quite plain. A simple leather-wrapped hilt and steel quillon are attached to a thin, flexible blade. (This sword gives you a +1 bonus to hit and to damage.) Add the sword to your list of weapons and go to **25.**

28

As you move through the fallen masonry, nothing of special interest is apparent. Roll one six-sided die (1d6). On a score of 1 or 2, go to **35.** If you roll 3 or higher, go to **7.**

29

"I'm not here to explore dead cities," you say to yourself as you step aboard the carpet again. But now, with the sun's arrival, the carpet quivers weakly, evidently unable to fly.

If you step off again and explore the city, go to **2.** If your judgment tells you to start walking in the direction the carpet was flying, go to **6.**

30

Your backtracking returns you to the avenue leading to the pyramid. If you explore the area around the pyramid, go to **16.** If you leave the city and walk east, go to **6.**

31

Hour after hour passes, and as you look down it seems as though you have been flying over the sea forever, for you're certain that you detect waves and whitecaps below. Finally, however, the first signs of dawn appear ahead, and in the pale light you realize you have crossed the sea and have been flying over an expanse of rolling desert. The carpet still flies well, and as the sun begins to appear on the horizon, you notice the remnants of some sort of city lying below.

If you attempt to land and investigate, go to **24.** If you decide to keep going, go to **3.**

32

The robbers must have discovered this tomb fairly recently, for their corpses are still bloated and rotting. It takes only a few minutes for you to decide that the bodies contain nothing of value. The glowing sword near the doorway catches your eye as you turn away, so you thrust it through your belt next to your own sheathed blade. Add it to your list of weapons.

If you want to examine the sarcophagus now, go to **37.** If you've had quite enough of the smell and only wish to leave, turn to **25.**

33

The "ivory palace," you notice, is really made of bleached limestone attractively decorated with mosaic tiles. On approaching the gateway in the wall, you discover its thick iron portcullis has been battered down and lies on the ground before you. As you step through the opening, you feel a magical tingle play over your skin.

Beyond the fallen portcullis, a long pool faces the palace, reflecting its silver dome within shimmering blue waters. Ringing the pool are several stone benches. To either side of you, two wings of the palace fronted by open, roofed galleries extend up to the towers in the wall. Each tower has an entryway at ground level through which you can see a flight of winding stairs. Go to **52.**

34

The rope seems old and tattered, but it will probably hold your light weight. You make it almost all the way up and are getting ready to swing onto the ledge before the opening when the rope finally parts.

Test your Strength to hold onto the lip of the ledge and climb over. If you are strong enough, go to **42.** If your Strength roll fails, you slip and fall, plummeting toward the ground 100′ below. With certain death a heartbeat away, you call on Rafii for help. Go to **19.**

35

As you pause for a moment, your keen hearing detects a snapping and scraping sound on the other side of a large pile of rubble. If you investigate, go to **7.** If you prefer to retreat cautiously, go to **30.**

36

Through an open archway in the left wing of the palace, you discover a well filled with water! Drinking from the well will cure all damage you have suffered from thirst and heat exposure. You may also fill both your waterskins if you wish. Go to **53.**

37

Approaching the sarcophagus, you observe it has an outer casing of stone, possibly protecting an inner casket beneath its heavy lid. Hieroglyphics are inscribed upon the lid's surface, and lying on the floor nearby is an iron bar.

If you cast a *read languages* spell, go to **14.** If you use the bar to attempt to open the sarcophagus, go to **41.** If you search the bodies for valuables before departing, go to **32.** If you decide to leave the room as it is and exit, go to **25.**

38

"I am the true Rafii," a voice speaks from the ruby as the face of a djinni appears in the gem. "Earlier, I sensed your arrival and knew you meant to do good. You carry Abu Iblis's soul in the tome you carry. Cast the book into the flames and he will be destroyed!"

Not hesitating, you drop the locket, cracking the ruby on the floor, and tear at your pack to pull out the book. From the fire pit, the almost-complete Abu Iblis screams in terror as you hurl the tome into the flames. In an instant, the fire pit explodes, shattering the reforming mage like a broken mirror. Then, from deep below the earth, a rumbling begins and the palace starts to shake.

The legs of the huge statue crack and it topples forward, forcing you to duck away from the locket holding the djinni. You make your way back upstairs and stagger out of the pavilion just as its silver dome collapses inward, sealing off the lower portions of the palace. Outside, the flagstone courtyard rolls like a choppy sea, and you barely make it past the gateway before the palace and its grounds begin to sink beneath the desert sands. The cataclysm lasts for several minutes, and you duck low behind a small dune in case some other explosion ravages the area. Finally the din stops, and all is quiet.

"Well done!" a voice booms.

You look up to see Rafii — now a 10′ humanoid whose lower portion is formed of a shimmering whirlwind — floating above you.

"I'm glad you're all right," you answer while getting to your feet.

"And I am pleased that you have destroyed the Accursed One and set me free! You have earned your reward indeed. I cannot journey farther than the edge of the desert, but the means is at hand to get you home. I shall journey with you at least as far as I may. Come!"

Go to **115.**

39

Check your Dexterity. If the roll is successful, go to **49.** Otherwise, go to **59.**

40

The heat of the sun is almost blistering, but you trudge onward for almost an hour. Then you climb a large hill and pause to look down. Resting in a valley below the sand dune you now stand upon is a white palace. A wall surrounds its perimeter, with a pair of tall, slim towers at the two corners nearest you. A gateway at the center apparently allows entry onto the grounds facing the domed palace itself, which is set back 100′ from the wall. Go to **33.**

41

You pick up the iron bar, wedge it under the lid, and try to slide the heavy stone aside. Test your Strength. If the roll is successful, go to **21.** Otherwise, you cannot open the sarcophagus and may either search the bodies and depart (go to **32**) or you can depart and leave the room as it is (go to **25**).

42

You have made it safely onto a ledge halfway up the pyramid. Several feet away, an aperture is roughly chiseled into its limestone shell, and beyond stretches a long gallery some 20′ in height and breadth. Hesitating to trust infravision, you decide to light one of your torches before entering. Cross one torch off your list and go to **5.**

43

As you swing the torch, you see your opponent's wrapped appendages begin to catch fire. You inflict 1-6 hit points damage with each successful hit. If you win the fight, go to **46.** If you are killed, go to **108.** If you wish to call Rafii for help, go to **19.**

44

The pool glistens in the sweltering heat like a sparkling blue jewel reflecting the palace as though its surface were a mirror. As you approach the edge of the pool, you can see its tiled bottom a foot below the surface of the water.

If you taste the water (especially tempting if you've been suffering from heat exposure), go to **39.** If you ignore the pool and explore somewhere else, return to **52.**

45

Roll for initiative and conduct combat. The cobras need a 14 (16 if you now wear chain mail) to hit you. Each cobra makes a single bite for 1-3 hit points damage. Further, you must make a Saving Throw vs. Poison if you are bitten, or take an additional 2 hit points of poison damage. You need to roll 11 or higher to hit a serpent, and each has 3 hit points.

If you kill all three cobras, go to **48.** If they kill you, go to **108.** If you wish to call on Rafii's aid, go to **65.**

46

As you fall back against the wall, exhausted and relieved that the monster is destroyed, you notice that the lid

of the sarcophagus has been partially slid aside by the mummy's emergence.

If you decide to search the sarcophagus, go to **22.** If you'd rather search the tomb robbers' bodies, go to **32.**

47

Moving toward the right wing of the palace, you note that quite a bit of rubble litters the walkway, as though various items were dumped onto the tiles for inspection. It's shady here, though. As you move to peer through a door left slightly ajar, three snakes slither out from a pile of refuse next to you.

If you decide to fight them, go to **45.** If you have memorized a *sleep* spell and would like to cast it, go to **61.** If you've found a magical scepter and would like to use it, go to **57.**

48

You dance and dodge as you meet the cobras attack for attack. Finally, the last of your foes lies cut in two, quivering in its death throes.

Continuing your exploration, you decide the right wing of the palace was once a barracks for Abu Iblis's men-at-arms. A few skeletons show where the men must have fallen during battle, but

the barracks appear to have been already (and thoroughly) searched). Return to **52.**

49

You lean over to touch the bottom of the pool and catch yourself before tumbling in. This is an illusion! There is no water — nor a bottom within immediate reach.

If you use your rope and grapple to descend into the pool, to see what lies beneath the illusion, go to **55.** If you'd rather explore elsewhere, go to **52.**

50

The main palace is octagonally shaped, and you enter through an archway. Its interior is an open pavilion richly tiled in green and yellow mosaics beneath a huge silver dome. Four sets of bronze double doors exit the pavilion.

You quickly peek through the crack between each set of double doors. Behind the northwest and southwest doors, stairs lead upward to the second floor. The other two doors, on the northeast and southeast, lead to stairs going down. Across from the pavilion's entryway, a fifth exit leads through an archway to the back of the palace grounds. Through the arch, you can see two more wings of the palace, each two stories high. Will you:

— Go through the northeast doors? (Go to **73.**)
— Go through the northwest doors? (Go to **54.**)
— Go through the southeast doors? (Go to **67.**)
— Go through the southwest doors? (Go to **69.**)
— Go through the far archway and explore the back of the palace grounds? (Go to **56.**)

51

Cautiously, you ascend the right tower to its top. In a room at the very height of the tower, a skeleton lies next to its broken sword. There is nothing else of value here, so you descend.

The left tower is similar to the right, but totally empty. The topmost room in this tower has an unglazed window that looks back into the palace grounds, providing a good view of the entire complex. From your lofty perch, you can see two more wings of the palace extending out to the rear of the two-story structure.

Check your Intelligence. If the roll is successful, go to **63.** Otherwise, return to **52.**

52

Will you:

— Examine the pool? (Go to **44.**)
— Check out the right wing of the palace? (Go to **47.**)
— Check out the left wing of the palace? (Go to **36.**)
— Investigate the towers? (Go to **51.**)
— Ignore everything else and head for the main palace? (Go to **50.**)

53

An opening next to the well leads to stables and a blacksmith's shop. Near the forge lies an ancient but complete set of chain mail. You may don it, if you wish, changing your armor class to 3. Return to **52.**

54

Through these doors, a stairway winds up and around the northern side of the pavilion, emerging onto a hallway. Several doorways lead to bedrooms, all ransacked and abandoned. At the hallway's end lie a pair of broken bronze doors leading into what you presume was Abu Iblis's bedchamber. Once sumptuously furnished, it now lies in tattered ruin, its silken tapestries and fine rugs slashed and thrown about in disarray.

Roll one six-sided die (1d6). If the result is 1 or 2, go to **75.** Otherwise, go to **111.**

55

Twenty feet below the lip of the pool, you reach bottom. At the eastern end of the pit, a passage leads forward toward the pavilion. To either side of this tunnel, stairs lead up to the courtyard. The illusion above is not visible, and the sun shines clearly through.

If you decide to explore the passage, go to **100.** If you'd rather leave and explore elsewhere, return to **52.**

56

Through the back archway, you discover the remains of four men, tied and beheaded. Between the right and left wings of the palace lie the remnants of a garden and vineyard, long withered away. Go to **58.**

57

You grasp the scepter and cast its *snake charm* spell. Immediately, the snakes rise up and begin to sway. With the tip of your sword, you gently lift each one and drop it into an old clay jar, covering it with a loose tile when all the snakes have been deposited.

Continuing to explore, you find a few bodies and what was once a barracks. From the wanton destruction of bunks, footlockers, and shelving, you decide not to waste your time looking for treasure here. The room has obviously been thoroughly searched. Return to **52.**

58

Will you:

— Explore the right (southern) wing? (Go to **71.**)
— Explore the left (northern) wing? (Go to **62.**)
— Ignore the rear area and check the main palace? (Return to **50** and make a different choice.)

59

As you lean down to submerge your arm in the water, you lose your balance and fall forward. The water and the pool's bottom are obviously an illusion! Take 2 hit points damage and go to **55.**

60

Behind a tapestry you notice the door to a secret compartment. Boy, would a thief be handy about now to check for traps! If you'd like to open the door, go to **70.** Otherwise, go to **58.**

61

As you chant the ancient syllables of the *sleep* spell, the cobras' hoods relax. They rest their heads on scaly backs and lie still. After cutting each one in half, you advance to the doorway and look in. You decide this was once a barracks, but now it contains only a few skeletons. Return to **52.**

62

Walking through an archway, you emerge into a long dining hall, once richly furnished. Rotting tapestries of green, scarlet, and gold hang along the chamber's white marble walls, and once-fine rugs lie beneath a layer of dust on the floor. Running down the center of the dining chamber is a sunken area, three steps below floor level. A short stairway at either end leads down. Here meals were enjoyed, as you discern from the remnants of cushions and low tables, dishes and serving pots.

Roll one six-sided die (1d6). If the

result is 1 or 2, go to **60.** Otherwise, you may search elsewhere (go to **58**) or cast a *detect magic* spell (if you have one memorized) on the carpets to see if they are magical (go to **74**).

63

As you glance down into the pool, you notice that the sun, which should be reflecting off its surface, is not visible in the water. Return to **52.**

64

The symbols on the door read, "Blessings upon the true believer. Death to the infidel." Go back to **69.**

65

If you have previously called on Rafii for assistance, go to **113.** Otherwise, go to **114.**

66

The liquid tastes delicious and refreshing. If you have sustained poison damage, the water cures it. Put the chalice carefully away in your pack and go to **58.**

67

Through the doors are stairs leading down. Halfway down, you come upon a skeleton lying across the stairs, a crossbow bolt through its chest. The skeleton has nothing of value, and you continue on. Go to **81.**

68

The faint glow of magic comes from a portion of the wall behind one of the tapestries. Go to **60.**

69

Through the doors, a stairway winds up and around the southern circumference of the palace, ending at a pair of brass doors inscribed with many designs and symbols. Lightly testing the door handles, you discover the doors are either stuck or barred from within.

If you can cast a *read languages* spell, go to **64.** If you have memorized a *knock* spell and would like to cast it, go to **86.** If you have neither spell, you can go to **78** to try and force the doors. If opening the doors seems like too much trouble, why not explore elsewhere? Go to **112.**

70

Your hands range over the section of wall, feeling for seams or loose masonry. Finally, you detect a stone which feels as though it is connected to some sort of spring. You press the stone, and a small door pops open to reveal a lidded crystal chalice. As you grasp the chalice, it begins to glow, changing colors each round.

Opening the lid, you discover what looks and smells like pure water. If you wish to drink the water now, go to **66.** Otherwise, close the chalice and carefully pack it away. Go to **58.**

71

As you walk to the right wing of the palace, it becomes apparent that this portion of the building contained kitchen facilities, including a functioning well along with a small wine press and an empty wine storage room.

If you have suffered damage from heat exposure, drink from the well to cure it. then return to **58** and make a different choice.

72

Cautiously, you draw near to the altar and discover it is of black obsidian. The blue-black leather cover of the book resting upon it glows with a series of magical runes. Will you:

— Cast a *read magic* spell (if you have one memorized)? (Go to **82.**)
— Check for traps as best you can, then take the book? (Go to **89.**)
— Examine the statue? (Go to **97.**)
— Leave this place before either the book, or the statue that's bound to animate, kills you? (Go to **112.**)

73

The stairs lead down, and you emerge onto a lower level. Go to **81.**

74

The carpets are not magical. Roll one six-sided die (1d6). If the result is 1, go to **68.** Otherwise, go to **58.**

75

You have discovered a secret door behind the bed! If you wish to open it, go to **84.** Otherwise, you may depart and search elsewhere in the palace (go to **111**).

76

Each tentacle automatically does 1 hit point damage each round until you are dead. You need to roll a 9 or higher to hit, and each tentacle has 3 hit points. If you destroy all the tentacles, go to **101.** If the tentacles kill you, go to **108.** If you call on Rafii for aid, go to **98.**

77

You don't see any traps, but you're certain there must be one, most likely focused through the light beams. First you try shooting out the windows with your bow, but they won't shatter. Then, remembering Rafii's exhortation to use wisdom, you pull the mirror from your pack and use it to direct one shaft of light away from the altar. With your other hand you reach in, grasp the tome, and pull it free. Go to **112.**

78

Test your Strength. If the roll is successful, go to **86.** Otherwise, return to **69** and try something else.

79

From what you hope is a safe distance, you hit the chest with your spell. The lock falls away, its top swings open, and a cloud of green gas fills the area around the chest but soon dissipates. You move forward, pleased at having avoided the trap. Go to **87.**

80

Cautiously, you try edging the book out onto the floor with the tip of your

sword, but a jolt of magical energy envelops you, and you scream. Make a Saving Throw vs. Spells. If the roll is successful, you succeed in knocking the book off the altar. Pack it away and depart immediately (go to **112**). If you fail the Saving Throw, go to **94.**

81

You have entered a chamber containing a large marble pool set into the floor. To one side, another staircase leads upward — back, you're certain, to the pavilion above. Across the room, a pair of brass doors block entry to the room beyond. Go to **88.**

82

The runes on the book's cover read "The Book of Souls." Go back to **72.**

83

Realizing these are the remains of Abu Iblis, and expecting the worst, you hurl a dagger into the corpse — but nothing happens. You approach closer, then leap forward, burying your sword in the skull. The white cranium turns to powder, and you rest easy. Abu Iblis's enemies have done a thorough job in slaying him.

Using the tip of your sword, you prod the body to expose the left hand, upon which is a golden moonstone ring similar to the one you possess. Removing it, you see that the two cobra-shaped rings will entwine and fit together. Remembering Rafii's words, you interlock the rings and place them on your finger.

"I release you," you speak.

Go to **104.**

84

At your touch, part of the wall slides away to reveal a small chamber hidden at the back of this wing of the palace. The outer wall is only a half-dozen feet in front of you, but the chamber extends at a right angle nearly 30', the width of the wing itself.

If you have the glowing sword from the pyramid, its light dimly illuminates a glint of gold and jewelry at the far end of the chamber. Otherwise, your infravision reveals several indistinct shapes which look intriguing. Light a torch from your pack if you want to see more clearly.

Nestled amid this undiscovered treasure horde is an iron chest, securely protected by a huge brass padlock. If you enter the chamber and investigate, go to **91.** If your judgment tells you to leave this area, go to **111.**

85

Will you:

— Surrender, hoping for merciful treatment? (Go to **107.**)
— Search the body in the hope of finding something that will help? (Go to **95.**)
— Run and don't look back? (Go to **105.**)

86

The magically held doors burst open to reveal a temple of some sort, with twin rows of pillars running down its length. No pews such as you've seen in more conventional temples are present. Instead, many prayer rugs are spread about the room. Along the walls, tapestries that reach from floor to ceiling depict creatures of fire and the nether regions.

Atop an altar at the far end of the chamber is a large black book illuminated by scarlet shafts that beam through a series of stained-glass windows near the roof. In an alcove directly behind the book, a 10'-tall stone statue of a jackal-headed man holds a skull-shaped scepter.

If you investigate the altar and its mysterious book, go to **72.** If you search the statue and the area near it, go to **97.** If you'd rather leave this place of evil, go to **112.**

87

Within the coffer lie two small vials of liquid. Taste tests reveal them to be potions of *healing* (heal 2-7 hit points per dose). There is also a spell book containing many incantations you hope someday to be able to cast.

In the very bottom of the chest, you discover a small, silken handkerchief, which to your surprise unfolds to a 7' x 10' area. Suspecting it has some interesting powers, you pack it away with the rest of your booty. Go to **111.**

88

If you'd like to:

— Explore the pool closely, go to **102.**
— Investigate the double brass doors, go to **99.**
— Leave the bath chamber and return to the level above, go to **109.**

89

Too bad you're not a thief! Check your Wisdom. If the roll is successful, go to **77.** Otherwise, go to **80.**

90

Within the maze of pipes, you find an oddity: a small glass bottle securely attached to one pipe by a harness. Removing the bottle and tipping it slightly, you discover a constant stream of life-giving water flows from its spout. The water completely cures any damage you have suffered from heat exposure.

You cap the bottle with an improvised plug cut from the end of a torch, and return to the courtyard. Go to **52.**

91

Scanning the ceiling and floor for any obvious sources of danger, you step through the doorway and begin edging toward the waiting treasure. Suddenly, a nightmare arises from the floor! Writhing black tentacles reach up to entwine you in their iron grip.

Roll one six-sided die (1d6) to see how many tentacles have you in their grip. You may fight the tentacles (go to **76**) or call on Rafii for help (go to **98**).

92

With an ominous creaking, the doors begin to swing outward. Instantly, you grab your sword. Beyond the doors, a huge chamber is revealed, lit only by the eerie glow of the fire pit nestled in the hands of a 15'-tall statue of a jackal-headed man. Columns surround the templelike auditorium, possibly hiding other areas from view in the shadows.

Lying on the floor just below the fire pit is a robed body. Cautiously, you advance toward it, keeping your eyes active for any ambush or danger. As you draw near the body, you note that its right arm ends abruptly at the wrist, while the other arm lies hidden from view. Go to **83.**

93

Removing a hammer and spike from your pack, you edge toward the chest. If you have a magical chalice, go to **103.** Otherwise, go to **96.**

94

With your last breath, your screaming abruptly ceases. Were anyone else present, he would notice a moonstone ring lying on the floor atop a pile of ashes. Your adventure has ended. Ω

95

Tearing at the body, you find a locket on a golden chain around its neck. You jerk the locket free, and instantly a large, red ruby at its center begins to glow with a soft light. A voice speaks.

If you have the book from the temple upstairs, go to **38.** Otherwise, go to **106.**

96

The lock breaks away and the lid pops open, spraying the area with a green gas. You fall unconscious, awakening hours later with a dull headache.

Since you haven't been harmed while unconscious, it occurs to you that it may be safe to stay here and study your spell book without fear of wandering monsters. You may rememorize or change spells as you desire. When you are through, don't forget to check the contents of the chest. **Go to 87.**

97

The statue certainly seems fearsome, and you hope it won't come to life. But as you near it, nothing happens. A search of the statue and the alcove reveals nothing. Go back to **86** and make a different choice.

98

If you have previously called upon Rafii for aid, go to **113.** Otherwise, go to **110.**

99

Drawing near to the doors, you sense magic. And lying before them is a blackened, shriveled hand — minus a finger. With a chill, you wonder if the remains of Abu Iblis await discovery beyond this portal. Testing the doors, you conclude a *knock* spell will be required to open them. If you do not have one in readiness, you may sit down and memorize this spell (go to **92**). Or, you may return to the upper level of the palace and explore elsewhere (go to **50,** but you may return to this section at any time you feel confident enough to penetrate the doors).

100

The passage leads forward about 100' to a small room filled with pipes. You feel certain some are drains, while others must serve purposes unknown.

Roll one six-sided die (1d6). If the result is 1 or 2, go to **90.** Otherwise, you may return to the courtyard and explore elsewhere. Go to **52.**

101

You swing your sword again and again, hacking your captors in half with each blow. The last of the horrid — creatures? — drops away, and you stumble to the far wall, safely out of reach of any others that may be lying in wait. Skirting the sides of the room, you make it to the far end and lay claim to quite a fortune in booty! You pack away many thousands of gold pieces' worth of rubies, emeralds, and gold. Then you turn your attention to the chest. Visions of the fantastic treasure within tantalize your imagination. Will you:

— Attack the lock with a hammer and spike to break it open? (Go to **93.**)
— Cast a *knock* spell (if you have one memorized)? (Go to **79.**)
— Ignore the chest and return to the ground floor of the palace? (Go to **111.**)

102

The water in the pool is fresh and clear, revealing several skeletons at its bottom. Steps lead down into the water, and the bottom of the pool may be clearly seen 4' below. Two small drains are set into the tiles on the bottom, one at each end of the pool. Return to **88.**

103

A brilliant green glow shines through your pack as you near the chest. It's your magical chalice, but is it warning you of danger or pointing the way to a fantastic treasure?

If you try to open the chest, go to **96.** If you feel the chalice is warning you to leave the chamber, go to **111.**

104

Instantly both moonstones shatter, and the flames of the fire pit rise to the roof of the chamber. Amid the roaring thunder of the fire, a humanoid figure begins to form. You step toward the statue to observe this fascinating sight, but in moments your fascination turns to horror. Taking shape in the flames is a figure identical to the body on the floor. You've been tricked into releasing the captive spirit of Abu Iblis!

"Well-meaning fool," the coalescing figure hisses down at you with an evil leer. "You have freed me from the entrapment I have endured for so long. How easy it was to trick your puny intellect into helping defeat those who bound me.

"Centuries ago, I transferred the essence of my magical powers into two rings so that my strength would never wane, no matter how time might wither my bodily shell. My soul was entrusted to the care of He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named; it resides elsewhere in safety. I was invincible until my enemies tricked me into using nearly all my stored power. Then my true enemies launched their forces against me, and in my weakened state I was overcome and driven into this chamber. But my consciousness remained, and so I did not truly die.

"My enemies were wise to remove but one ring — one portion of my magical essence — for that act blinded and weakened me more than if they had removed both halves of the ring. They knew that, with only a part of my magic separated from my body and soul, I would never be able to muster my energies over the centuries and re-form.

"My enemies cast all manner of enchantments over the palace to keep out those of evil or greed who might aid me, but overlooked what I had realized: One of unselfish heart might be seduced into coming here and reuniting my magical essences, giving me the power to form a new bodily shell and reclaim my soul. You, in your beguiled innocence, were able to enter the grounds and accomplish that task. And shortly, when I am fully re-formed in my new body, I shall thank you properly."

Go to **85.**

105

You bolt from the room, leaving Abu Iblis to complete his re-formation. As you leave the palace grounds and run blindly into the desert, you hear his laughter echoing behind you. To your relief, he doesn't seem to be following . . . but perhaps he doesn't need to. You're all alone in the most forbidding land your world has to offer, with no idea of how to find civilization. Your chances of survival are virtually nil, and Abu Iblis knows this. That's why he's not following — your death will be much slower this way. Ω

106

"I am the true Rafii," the voice speaks. "It is too late now to stop Abu Iblis. Hurl me into the flames while there is yet time!"

Without hesitating, you hurl the locket into the fire pit and it explodes, releasing a shimmering whirlwind which carries you out of the chamber and away from the palace as Abu Iblis curses. You fly across the sand like a shooting star to land safely at the desert's edge on a hill overlooking a small village.

A shadow falls, and you look up to see a bearded, 10'-tall, muscular humanoid whose lower portions are shrouded in the dust of a whirlwind. "This is as far as I may take you," the djinni speaks.

"I didn't mean to—" you begin.

The djinni hold up his hand to stop your words. "I know you meant only good," his voice booms. "You were deceived into serving evil. Yet you have freed me from Abu Iblis's bondage. Though his power is again great, his reign is not fully established. I will seek out those who can face him on equal terms — and in time he shall fall. For now, fare you well, and my thanks for freeing me."

With that, the djinni fully assumes the form of a whirlwind and flies off, leaving you alone. If you want, you can begin to make your way back home. But if you can find a way, perhaps you'll head back into the desert to help fight Abu Iblis.

Dejected, you begin walking down toward the town below. Ω

107

You receive no mercy, and what you do receive is too unpleasant to describe. Consider your adventure over! Ω

108

As your vision begins to grow dark, you realize that you are dying. The sounds of the world around you fade away, replaced by a loud ringing in your ears. The peace of death comes a moment later, and your last thoughts are the realization that your quest has failed. Ω

109

Back upstairs, you have several choices. Will you:

— Go through the northwest doors? (Go to **54.**)
— Go through the southwest doors? (Go to **69.**)
— Explore the back of the palace grounds? (Go to **56.**)

110

A whirlwind begins to fill the room, pulling you away from the tentacles' grasp and depositing you back downstairs. Will you:

— Go through the northeast doors? (Go to **73.**)
— Go through the southeast doors? (Go to **67.**)
— Go through the southwest doors? (Go to **69.**)
— Explore the back of the palace grounds? (Go to **56.**)

111

You return downstairs. Would you care to:

— Go through the northeast doors? (Go to **73.**)
— Go through the southeast doors? (Go to **67.**)
— Go through the southwest doors? (Go to **69.**)
— Explore the back of the palace grounds? (Go to **56.**)

112

Back downstairs, you must decide whether to:

— Go through the northeast doors? (Go to **73.**)
— Go through the southeast doors? (Go to **67.**)
— Go through the northwest doors? (Go to **54.**)
— Explore the back of the palace grounds? (Go to **56.**)

113

Desperately, you hope that Rafii's powers are great enough to help you a second time, but there is no response. Go to **108.**

114

A whirlwind engulfs the serpents, sweeping them away into the desert. With the whirlwind's coming, you sense Rafii weakening.

Inside this wing of the building are only some skeletons in what was once their barracks. Return to **52.**

115

It's great to be home — and it's not bad being rich, either. You've a pack full of gold and jewels, Abu Iblis's spell book, and a flying carpet that folds down into a silken handkerchief, among other treasures. But coming home with the tale of a great adventure surely is the best treasure.

After all, how many elves can count a djinni as a friend? Ω

THE GOLDEN BOWL OF ASHU H'SAN

BY RICK SWAN

An angry spirit can even steal the rain.

Artwork by Richard Bennett
Cartography by Diesel

Rick Swan has been involved in a number of projects for TSR, Inc. He's written parts of OA2 Night of the Seven Swords, *REF4* Book of Lairs II, *I13* Adventure Pack I *("Sharla's Zoo"), AC10* Bestiary of Dragons and Giants, *and OP1* Tales of Outer Planes, *among others. He was also an editor and developer for M3* Twilight Calling *and N5* Under Illefarn. *He and his wife, Lindsey, live in Des Moines, Iowa.*

"The Golden Bowl of Ashu H'San" is intended for 3-5 AD&D® *Oriental Adventures* characters of 2nd-4th level, including at least one wu jen or shukenja. Characters with proficiencies in dance or poetry would also be helpful.

For the Dungeon Master

Hard times have fallen on Ashu H'San. A primitive community in a remote corner of Kara-Tur, Ashu H'San is populated by *hyakusho* (common folk) entirely dependent on agriculture for their meager existence. But no rain has fallen for nearly six months, and the situation is getting desperate. Crops are withering, food is becoming scarce, and the possibility of widespread famine and a major uprising among the peasants is becoming increasingly likely.

The most prominent citizen of Ashu H'San is Tambiro Hichima, a respected shukenja. Hichima was born in Ashu H'San, then left at an early age to begin a life of solitude as a wandering priest. He was drawn back to his homeland a few years ago when his gods revealed to him that his spiritual growth would be fortified by service to the poverty-stricken citizens in his hometown. Hichima has reluctantly but conscientiously served as the advisor and governor of Ashu H'San since then, patiently waiting for a sign from the gods to resume his wandering.

Although initially at a loss to explain the drought, Hichima has confirmed the community's worst fear — somehow the spirits who traditionally ensure a bountiful harvest and regular rainfall have been angered. Hichima has been unable to divine the nature of the offense or how to appease the spirits.

The center of spiritual activity for Ashu H'San is known to be the Golden Bowl, a vast field of yellow poppies located in the distant hills beyond the outskirts of the village. Hichima believes the spirits would grant an audience at the Golden Bowl, but he has also foretold of great danger to anyone

who goes there; so far, none of the villagers has been able to summon the courage to make the trip.

Unknown to Hichima, the site of the Golden Bowl has been desecrated by a tribe of shan sao who decided that it would be a good area to homestead. To get material for their houses, the shan sao demolished a number of small shrines on the perimeter of the Golden Bowl. The shrines, unfortunately, had been dedicated to a powerful p'oh; the p'oh has retaliated against their destruction by creating the drought.

The shan sao have no intention of abandoning their new settlement. The p'oh stubbornly intends to continue the drought until this offense is rectified. To restore order, the PCs must rid the area of the shan sao, make an offering of sacred waters at the Golden Bowl to summon the p'oh, and make peace with him.

Adventure Background

The PCs have been ordered by their daimyo to journey to Ashu H'San, to investigate the drought and search for solutions. The motives of the daimyo are twofold: he has genuine compassion for the plight of the villagers, but he also is concerned about an uprising if their situation is not improved. The daimyo instructs the PCs to meet with Tambiro Hichima, who will provide them with details upon their arrival in Ashu H'San.

The journey to Ashu H'San is an easy one, though uneventful. It is well known that Ashu H'San is virtually destitute, so travelers to the isolated community are few. As the PCs near Ashu H'San, they notice that the vegetation is withered and the earth is dry and cracked. Clearly, it has been a long time since this part of the country has tasted rain.

The community of Ashu H'San is little more than a collection of one-room shacks with thatched roofs and rickety wooden walls. Peasants dressed in cheap cotton robes trudge through the dusty streets, some carrying sobbing babies, some pushing empty carts. Some are huddled against buildings, their heads buried in their arms. If the PCs linger in any one place for more than a few seconds, a small filthy boy approaches them and begs for food. If they ignore him, he hangs his head and slinks away. If they give him a morsel to eat, he clutches this treasure to his chest and runs away. Instantly, 2-20 more ragged children appear. They clamor for food, clutch at the PCs' clothing, and even rummage through the adventurers' belongings if not sternly chased away.

Any citizen can direct the PCs to the home of Tambiro Hichima, located in the center of the village. Except for the small symbols on the door designating the home of a local official, the shack is similar to all the others.

The daimyo has sent advance word of the PCs' arrival, so Hichima is expecting them. A small man of about 80 years, Hichima has a bald head, kind brown eyes, and wears a long brown cotton robe. He graciously welcomes the PCs and invites them inside.

Tambiro Hichima, 2nd-level shukenja: AC 10; MV 9"; hp 8; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 9, I 12, W 14, D 6, C 9, Ch 12; AL LG; spells: *augury, detect harmony, detect poison, omen;* proficiencies: agriculture, calligraphy, jo stick, religion, tea ceremony.

Furnishings are very sparse, and Hichima seats the PCs on tattered bamboo floor mats. He apologizes for not offering them tea after their long journey, but says that the drought has made such pleasures "an impossible extravagance."

Hichima then explains the grim situation in Ashu H'San. The principal livelihood here is the harvesting of barley. Although the barley has little value as a commodity, enough can be grown to keep the community fed; the citizens have learned to make do with few of the luxuries taken for granted in other parts of the province.

The farmers count on regular monthly rains to nourish the barley crops, but when none had fallen during the first two months of the growing season, they began to worry. After another rainless month, Hichima used his modest shukenja abilities to divine the reason. He determined that the spirits were angry about something, but he was unable to discover why.

Hichima tells the PCs that the spiritual focus for Ashu H'San is the Golden Bowl, a valley of yellow poppies located in the hills several miles beyond the outskirts of the village. A journey to the Golden Bowl to commune with the spirits could possibly provide some answers, but Hichima had a premonition that anyone making the trip would encounter great danger. Consequently, none of the villagers has been willing to go. "Perhaps it was foolish of me to reveal this aspect of my divination to the citizens," he says. "But to withhold the full truth I felt would be dishonorable." Hichima has contemplated making the journey himself, but feels that only his daily presence in the village has prevented the growing discontent among the citizens from developing into a full-scale uprising.

At this point, Hichima asks if the PCs are willing to make the journey. Assuming they agree, Hichima then tells them what they must do to get an audience with the spirits at the Golden Bowl.

In the wilderness between the village and the Golden Bowl, explains Hichima, are three small golden shrines erected in honor of the spirits who watch over the province. In each shrine is an ivory bowl containing a small amount of sacred water. If one spoonful of sacred water from each of these ivory bowls is deposited on the ground in the Golden Bowl, the spirits will grant an audience. (Unknown to Hichima, the waters from the ivory bowls also have their own magical properties, which are explained in detail in the note to the DM following encounter 3.)

Hichima then rummages through an old trunk made of thatched bamboo and produces three jade bowls and an ivory spoon. He gives these items to the PCs, instructing them to remove the ivory bowls from the shrines and replace them with these jade bowls so as not to further upset the spirits. He tells them to carry the sacred waters in their ivory bowls. When they complete their journey, they should use the ivory spoon to deposit one spoonful of water from each of the ivory bowls into the Golden Bowl.

If the PCs show concern about leaving the jade bowls empty in the shrines, Hichima reassures them that it is not necessary to fill them. If Hichima later divines that the gods desire the jade bowls to be filled with holy water or some other substance, he will attend to it himself.

Hichima gives the PCs sufficient food for their journey. He also gives each PC a hollow gourd filled with a gallon of water, cautioning them that they should use it sparingly, as water is impossible to find outside the village.

The PCs may question Hichima, but he has no other information for them. He suggests they get some rest so they can get an early start in the morning.

The Journey

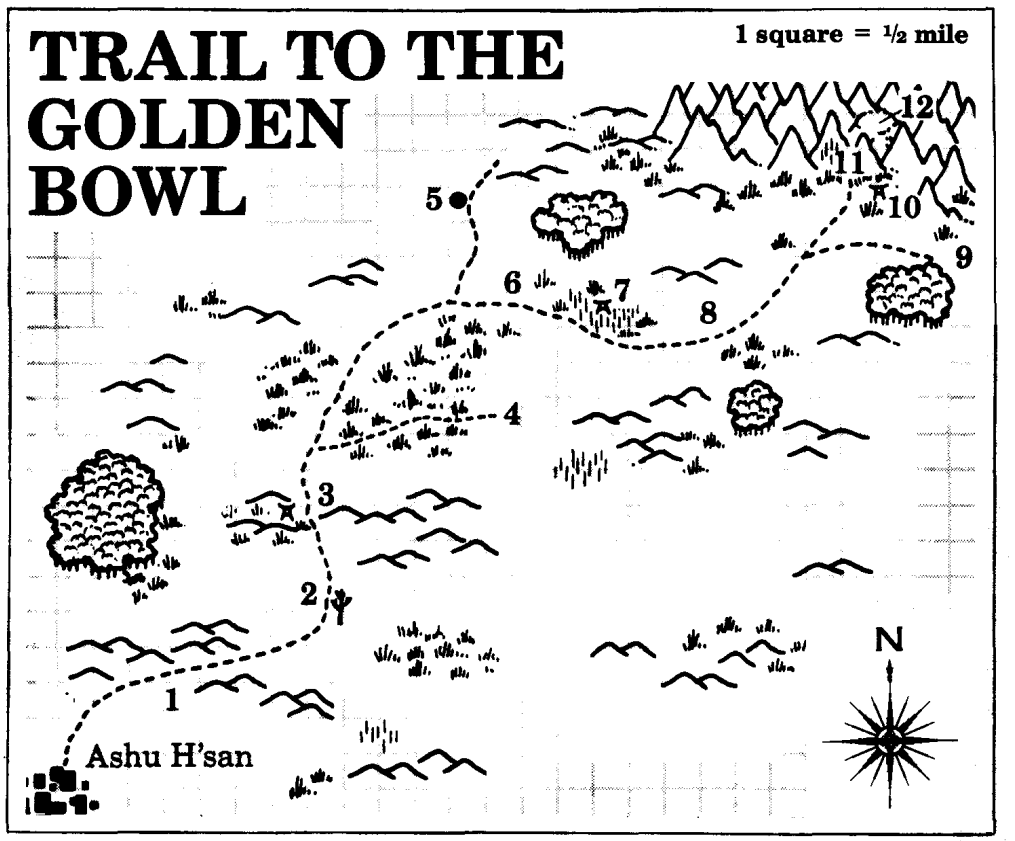
Shortly after dawn the next day, Hichima escorts the PCs to the edge of the village. The Golden Bowl lies about 15 miles to the northeast in a valley entirely encircled by high hills. Hichima points out a crude dirt pathway that winds through the wilderness. He suggests they follow this trail as it will take them directly to the Golden Bowl. They will also be able to see the golden shrines if they stay on this trail. Hichima neglects to mention that there are several forks in the trail, as he has made the journey to the Golden Bowl so many times that he ignores these side paths. There is little to recommend one fork of the path over another to travelers who have not previously journeyed from Ashu H'San to the Golden Bowl.

Even accounting for detours, the PCs should be able to make the journey on foot in a day. Hichima discourages them from taking horses or any other mounts, as these animals will use too much of their precious water supply.

Before the PCs depart, Hichima again warns them to beware of danger. He offers a brief prayer and then sends them on their way.

If the PCs stay on the trail and head northeast, they have little chance of getting lost. They will find the countryside to be quite pleasant, with clear skies and rolling hills. In better times, much of this area was used for farming, but it is now mostly barren. Grasses and weeds, once tall and green, are now stunted and brown. Willow and ginkgo trees occasionally dot the hills, but these too are withered and cracked.

Throughout the day, the temperature never rises above 75°, but the air is dry and there are no breezes. There are few signs of animals or birds, as most of these creatures have long since abandoned the area for a more hospitable environment.



Encounter Key

1. The Water Peddler

> The first half-hour of the journey has been uneventful, even relaxing, thanks to the warm rays of the rising sun and the stillness of the countryside. The dusty trail is easy to follow as it winds over the barren hills toward a small mountain range barely visible in the distance.

> As you approach the base of a steep hill, the silence is broken by a voice coming from a shallow valley to the north. "Friends!" cries the voice. "Please wait! I have something for you!"

The voice belongs to an overweight man dressed in grimy cotton clothing. He is pulling an equally grimy donkey behind him. Two large barrels are secured to the donkey's back. The man pants and puffs as he drags the reluctant donkey toward the party, frantically crying for them to wait.

The man is **Miko Himadi** (AC 10; MV 12"; zero-level human; hp 4; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (walking staff/bo stick); AL CN), a derelict from Ashu H'San who has been involved in more than his share of shady deals. Himadi recently discovered a pool of contaminated water in a remote forest and has filled these barrels with the rancid liquid. He plans to return to the village and sell the water at premium prices. Spotting the PCs, he thinks he has found his first customers.

Himadi makes pleasant conversation with the PCs, introducing himself as one of Ashu H'San's most honored explorers. At great personal risk, he says, he has journeyed into the wilderness in search of desperately needed water for his people. "I was most fortunate to collect this modest amount from a shallow pool before the sun drank it all up."

Regardless of what the PCs share with him about themselves or their quest, Himadi insists that they are seriously undersupplied with water. He has prepared several leather pouches, each containing about a cup of his rancid water, and offers to sell them to the party for 10 tael each. If the PCs balk at the price, he quickly lowers it to five tael. Himadi will ultimately settle for one tael or will trade a pouch for any item worth at least that much.

Himadi continues to badger the PCs until they buy some of his water. If they ignore him and leave, he follows. If they threaten him, he backs off, only to return later. The easiest way to get rid of him is to give in; a single purchase, even one tael's worth, will satisfy him and send him on his way. If attacked by the PCs, Himadi flees for his life.

The contaminated water has no unusual taste or odor, although *detect poison* or a similar spell could reveal its nature. Any PC who drinks it must make a saving throw vs. poison or suffer 1d4 hp damage one turn later.

2. Trapped Fox.

> The monotony of the barren landscape is interrupted by a single large willow tree. This tree looks much healthier than the few others seen so far, apparently because of its size. The long, leafy branches which stretch to the sky suggest deep roots capable of seeking water from far beneath the surface.
>
> A sound is coming from near the base of the tree, a desperate rasping bark that sounds like the cries of a wounded animal.

If the PCs approach the tree, they see that the sounds are coming from a trapped fox. Its leg appears to be tightly clamped between the jaws of a large iron trap which is secured by a chain to the tree trunk. There is no blood, but the fox seems to be in bad shape. It is lying on its side, its tongue lolling from its mouth. The fox barks weakly at the party as if crying for help.

Although the party has no immediate way of knowing this, the creature is actually a hu hsien in its fox form.

Hu hsien: AC 7; MV 15"; HD 6; hp 36; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 or by weapon type; SA *fascination* when in human form (18 charisma, 25 comeliness); SD hit only by +3 weapons or better, heals 2 hp per hour, immune to fire, half damage from cold attacks; AL CE; spells: *apparition, become invisible, chameleon, comprehend languages, disguise, ESP, hypnotic pattern, hypnotism, know history, polymorph self, read magic, ventriloquism,* all once per round; *major creation, possess, servant horde,* all once per day; *ancient curse, reward* three times per week.

Earlier in the day, three hu hsien planned an ambush here for unwary passers-by. One of the hu hsien was carefully secured in this iron trap to make him appear to be the hapless victim of a hunter's snare (the trap's jaws are strong but have no teeth). The other two hid in the branches of the tree. When a curious traveler heard the helpless animal in the trap and came to investigate, the hu hsien in the tree would pounce, robbing him and possibly draining his life-force.

However, the plan backfired when a curious li lung (see encounter 8) swooped in to check out the barking sounds. Not wishing to risk tangling with a dragon, the two hu hsien in the tree used *polymorph self* to transform into birds and fly away. The li lung subsequently lost interest and flew away too, but the two frightened hu hsien never returned, leaving their trapped companion to fend for itself.

This remaining hu hsien is getting panicky. There has been no sign of its friends for hours, and it is unable to free itself from the trap without their help. Even in its human form, it is not strong enough to pry open the steel jaws.

When the hu hsien sees the PCs, it pretends to be dying, gasping and barking pathetically in an attempt to lure them closer. If they hesitate, it uses *ventriloquism* to cause them to hear a deep, commanding voice whisper in their ears: "You must not stand by and allow this helpless creature to perish. It, like you, is a child of the gods. If it should die, a curse awaits you and your descendents!"

The hu hsien continues with similar warnings until one or more PCs approach. The hu hsien lies still while the PCs free it. If they hesitate, it uses *hypnotism* to command them to set it free. Any two PCs with strengths of 11 or better are able to open the trap. If the party has heavy weapons or appropriate tools, the trap could also be smashed.

Once free, the hu hsien takes the first opportunity to *hypnotize* a PC and whisper to him to give up his water gourd. If it gets this far, the hu hsien commands the PC to accompany it back to its lair; the hu hsien plans to drain the PC's life force at its leisure.

If any party members threaten to interfere with this plan, the hu hsien uses *hypnotic pattern* to keep them at bay. The hu hsien also has a wakizashi concealed in the grass and will change to human form and engage in ferocious combat with any attacking PC. As the hu hsien can only be hit by +3 weapons, it is a formidable foe.

If at any point the tide turns against the hu hsien, it uses *polymorph self* to transform into an eagle and fly away, preferably with one or more of the PCs' water gourds.

3. The First Golden Shrine.

> The path winds gently up the slope of a high hill. From its summit, you see a small structure in the valley below. It is surrounded by bushes and other vegetation, and the sun glistens from its golden walls.

This is the first of the golden shrines which contain the ivory bowls of sacred water.

The shrine is modest by Kara-Tur standards. It is about 20' square with wooden walls imbedded with golden flecks to make it sparkle in the sun. The shrine rests on a raised stone foundation surrounded by a variety of bushes and small trees.

Inside the shrine are a number of small wooden carvings of farmers, millers, and other laborers. A *dotaku* (bronze bell) hangs from the center of the ceiling. Against the north wall is a wooden pedestal containing an ivory bowl engraved with numerous *sutras* (religious scriptures). This is the bowl the PCs are seeking. If a PC removes the lid from the bowl, he will see that it contains four spoonsful of sacred water.

If the party removes the ivory bowl and replaces it with the jade bowl, then leaves the shrine without disturbing anything else, the party will be *blessed.* The effects of this spell will last for 24 hours. They will not receive this benefit at either of the other two golden shrines.

Note to the DM

Unknown to the PCs, the water in the ivory bowl at each of the golden shrines has its own unique magical properties. A spoonful of water from the ivory bowl in the first shrine is equal to one dose of a potion of *sweet water.* One spoonful from the bowl in the second shrine is equal to a dose of a potion of *healing,* and one spoonful from the bowl in the third shrine is equal to a dose of a potion of *heroism.* If the party discovers the magical properties of the waters, they are free to use them at will.

One spoonful of water from each of the ivory bowls poured on the ground in the Golden Bowl will summon the p'oh; attempting this elsewhere has no effect. If the PCs mix the waters from the three bowls together before pouring them into the Golden Bowl, the p'oh will still be summoned, but the waters will not retain their special magical properties.

4. Snarling Death

The path ends in a vast meadow of brown and brittle weeds. You have obviously taken a wrong turn. The sound of howling rises in the distance, growing louder with each passing moment.

A trio of large gray wolves darts from the bushes. They sprint across the meadow in your direction, stopping about 10′ in front of you. The wolves are snarling and their fangs are bared. They are poised to spring.

The wolves are the trained hunting animals of a group of bakemono who are searching the area for victims to rob. The wolves caught the scent of the PCs, and they were sent ahead to hold them until the bakemono catch up.

Wolves (3): AC 7; MV 18″; HD 2+2; hp 16, 14, 13; #AT 1; Dmg 2-5; AL N.

As long as the PCs remain motionless and take no hostile actions, the wolves stand their ground and continue to snarl. If the PCs back away or retreat, the wolves follow. If the PCs attempt to move ahead, the wolves snap at them, attacking if necessary to get them to stay put. The wolves will not attack unless provoked, but they will defend themselves viciously if attacked.

A group of six bakemono emerge from the meadow 10 minutes after the appearance of the wolves. One is armed with a katana, two with naginatas, and three with spears. The bakemono intend to rob the PCs and have no qualms about killing them. Once the robbery is completed, the bakemono plan to turn the PCs over to their hungry wolves.

Bakemono (6): AC 6; MV 6″; HD 1−1; hp 7, 6, 5(×2), 4, 3; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6 or by weapon type; AL CE.

When the bakemono emerge from the meadow, the one with the katana whistles, and the wolves leap at the PCs and attack with their fangs. One round later, the six bakemono join the wolves in attacking the party.

The bakemono will not negotiate, and they pursue if the PCs attempt to escape. All of the wolves fight to the death, but if more than two of the bakemono are killed, the rest of the bakemono retreat into the meadow. If they wish, the PCs can probably catch the slow-moving bakemono, but if the PCs let them escape, the bakemono will not be seen again.

The PCs may keep the weapons of any slain bakemono. They have nothing else of value.

5. Abandoned Well.

The countryside here is flat and furrowed. In better times, it would be ideal farmland, but now the rich topsoil is little more than dry powder.

Just off the pathway is a large hole in the ground about 12′ in diameter. A mountain of dirt is piled beside it.

Shortly after the drought began, a group of farmers from Ashu H'San tried to dig a well here in hopes of finding a new source of water to irrigate their fields. But after digging to a depth of 15′, there was no trace of moisture and the project was abandoned.

A jishin mushi has taken up residence in the hole and has built a nest of sticks and leaves in the bottom. It is always hungry and would welcome the opportunity to have a PC for its next meal.

Jishin Mushi: AC 3; MV 9″/3″; HD 5+4; hp 34; #AT 1; Dmg 2-16; SA tremor; AL N.

The jishin mushi is extremely sensitive and will be aware of the party (through vibrations in the ground) when they walk within 25′ of the hole. It waits quietly, hoping one of them will come closer to the hole before it attacks.

A PC peering into the hole sees nothing but darkness. As soon as a PC comes within 3′ of the hole, the jishin mushi begins to use its tremor ability, continuing the tremors for five rounds. In the sixth round of tremors, when the effects of *earthquake* begin, the jishin mushi flies out of the hole before its walls collapse. (The DM is advised to review the effects of the jishin mushi's tremor attack on page 123 of *Oriental Adventures*.) At any point during the tremor attack, any PC within 3′ of the hole will fall in on a roll of 1-4 on 1d6 (check each round).

Once out of the pit, the jishin mushi tries to capture a PC in its mandibles; it will go after the PC who appears to be the most incapacitated from the tremors. The jishin mushi has no desire to fight it out with the rest of the party. It just wants to fly away with a PC and eat him in peace.

It should be easy to frustrate the jishin mushi, as conscious PCs will have little trouble slipping free from its mandibles. If the PCs continue to resist, the jishin mushi relocates within 5′ of the largest group of PCs and commences a second sequence of tremor attacks. If this fails to secure an unconscious PC, or if at any point it loses more than half its hit points, it attempts to escape by flying away.

There is nothing of value in the pit. However, the ichor of the jishin mushi can be sold for two tael per pint to most incense makers.

6. The Old Man and the Stick.

Some distance away on the path is an old man dressed in rags, staggering and weaving in random directions, holding a pointed branch in front of him. He abruptly spins on his heels, points the stick in your direction, and hobbles toward you.

The old man's name is **Chomei Karo** (AC 10; MV 9″; zero-level human; hp 3; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; AL CN). He is a hermit who lives in the wilderness with his companion, a li lung. The li lung is currently off attending to business of his own (scaring the hu hsien at encounter 2 in the process) while Karo searches for water.

Karo is carrying a ginkgo branch. A special *divining rod* spell has been cast on the branch, giving it the permanent ability to locate water. Sensing the water in the possession of the party, the branch is pulling Karo toward them.

Karo approaches the party wide-eyed, the branch quivering in his hands, and demands that they give him their water. "Give it to me!" he screeches. "Give me that water, or you'll be sorry!"

Karo is somewhat feeble-minded, and any attempt by the party to reason with him falls on deaf ears. Giving him a little water won't satisfy him. He wants it all. "I found it! It belongs to me!"

Karo has no weapons, and he is too feeble to attack the party. If the PCs threaten him or even raise their voices, Karo shrieks and runs away in terror, calling back, "You'll be sorry! I'll get you for this!" He trips, scrapes his leg, and then stumbles off into the wilderness.

The PCs may pursue him if they wish, but Karo will not freely assist or accompany them. He has no information and gives no hint about the existence of the li lung. (The li lung will turn up in encounter 8 along with Karo, assuming he gets safely away.)

7. The Second Golden Shrine.

> Just beyond a bamboo grove is a small structure, half-hidden by willow trees and thick bushes. Its golden walls sparkle in the bright sunshine.

This is the second golden shrine. It is structurally identical to the shrine in encounter 3.

This shrine is occupied by a young woman dressed in black silk robes. She is sitting with her legs crossed in front of the pedestal containing the ivory bowl. Her head is bowed.

The young woman's name is Kiki Ku. She is a novice shukenja on religious retreat. Kiki Ku has journeyed far from her home in the east, drawn by the isolation and serenity of this part of the continent. She has no knowledge of the Ashu H'San drought or the significance of the golden shrine. She has stopped here to meditate, as she does at every holy place.

Kiki is extremely arrogant and prideful. She believes her shukenja status automatically makes her superior, and she tends to be smug when dealing with others, even with other shukenjas. Her time in the wilderness may teach her humility, but she has a long way to go.

Kiki Ku: AC 7; MV 12"; Shu 1; hp 5; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 10, I 15, W 12, D 10, C 14, Ch 16; AL LG; studded leather armor; spear; spells: *know history;* proficiencies: spear, religion, calligraphy, poetry, dance.

When the PCs approach, Kiki looks up at them disgustedly, obviously upset by the intrusion. "Please go away," she says firmly. "My communion with the spirits must not be interrupted."

If asked, Kiki proudly tells them her name and her purpose here. She listens impatiently to the PCs' story. "Your tale is interesting, but your mission is less important than the spiritual nourishment of one such as myself."

Kiki is unmoved by any requests for cooperation. If asked how long she intends to stay, she says, "The rest of the day. And perhaps the next."

Kiki is unarmed. If the PCs threaten her or move to take the ivory bowl in spite of her opposition, she warns them, "Continue with this desecration and you risk the wrath of the gods. I swear I will see you destroyed!" This is an idle threat, but the PCs have no immediate way of knowing it.

If the PCs persist, Kiki suggests an honorable compromise. She challenges a PC of the party's choice to a contest in either dance or poetry. Any single PC with a proficiency in either area may participate in the contest. If no PC has a proficiency in either area, Kiki declares herself the automatic winner. (For details on how to run a contest, see page 52 of *Oriental Adventures.*)

If Kiki wins, she laughs heartily and mocks the PCs' ineptitude. Her day made, she then allows them to take the ivory bowl, but only if she can accompany them on their journey. "You obviously have a lot to learn," she says. "It is my duty to aid those incapable of helping themselves." If the PCs refuse, she won't let them take the bowl.

If Kiki loses, she hangs her head in shame. She allows them to take the ivory bowl and then humbly asks if she can accompany them. "It appears the gods have sent you to teach me humility," she says. "Perhaps there is more I can learn from you." If the PCs refuse, she accepts their decision and leaves.

In spite of their awkward introduction, Kiki proves to be a pleasant and helpful traveling companion. She is very knowledgeable about nature, and her *know history* spell can also be useful. However, she will not participate in combat in deference to her religious vows.

There are about four spoonsful of water in this shrine's ivory bowl. Each spoonful is equal to one dose of a *potion of healing.*

8. The Old Man's Revenge. If the old man from encounter 6 successfully escaped, read both boxed sections below. If he was killed or taken along, read only the second boxed section. If the PCs managed to avoid encounter 6 and thus haven't met the old man, skip this encounter entirely.

> Continuing down the trail through this open area, you hear a shriek of recognition coming from behind you, followed by a familiar voice. "There they are! That's who tried to kill me! Get them!"

If the party turns to look, they see the tattered figure of Chomei Karo running after them. He is waving frantically and pointing in their direction.

> You feel a warm breeze, the first that has disturbed the still air since this journey began. The breeze increases in intensity, and the sound of flapping wings can be heard. You see nothing, but the flapping sound passes overhead, blowing up the dust at your feet.
>
> The source of these disturbances abruptly becomes clear. A horrible creature appears on the path before you. It is nearly 18' long, with the body of a lion, the head of a dragon, and large leathery wings. It hovers about 10' off the ground, then charges.

This creature is a li lung, the companion of Karo. Many years ago, the li lung was severely wounded by a group of hunters. He was discovered by Karo, who nursed him back to health. The li lung has been loyal to the old man ever since.

Li lung, adult, average oriental dragon: AC 4; MV 9"/24"//6"(1"-6"); HD 8; hp 40; #AT 3; Dmg 2-8/2-8/1-20; SA cause earthquake; SD continual *ESP, invisible* and *polymorph* into human at will; AL N.

After his earlier encounter with the PCs, Karo raced back to the li lung and claimed they had tried to kill him, displaying his bruised leg as evidence. The li lung is now seeking revenge. (If Karo didn't return to the li lung due to his capture or death, the li lung has been looking for him. Using his *ESP* ability, the li lung has determined that the party is responsible for Karo's disappearance.)

The charging li lung attacks as many PCs as he can reach with his claws and teeth. The li lung is furious and tries to kill them all. After three rounds of combat, the li lung backs off and uses his special talent to cause an earthquake. He then resumes his attack.

If Karo is present, he flees as soon as combat begins. The li lung cannot be appeased and is willing to fight to the death if he feels it is necessary to avenge his friend. However, if the li lung sees that Karo has fled to safety, he stops fighting if he loses more than half his hit points. He becomes *invisible* and flies away.

9. The Camphor Tree.

> Large hills line the horizon. A vast expanse of flat land stretches before you, barren except for a single large camphor tree not far from the trail. The tree appears to be yet another casualty of the drought. It has no foliage, and its branches are shriveled and cracked.

A bisan occupies this camphor tree. In better times, villagers would journey to the tree and harvest its sap to make potions and ointments. The bisan allowed this harvesting in return for the villagers' respect and care for her tree. However, since the drought set in, no villagers have been to the tree for months. The bisan is angry, feeling that the villagers have betrayed her trust by neglecting her tree, which is now on the verge of dying from lack of water.

Bisan: AC 0; MV 24"; HD 10; hp 55; #AT 1; Dmg 1-10 or by spells; AL N; spells: *polymorph self, turn invisible,* both at will; *bless* (and its reverse), *castigate, cause paralysis, pacify, animate wood, wood shape, elemental turning, quickgrowth, ironwood,* once per round.

The bisan spends most of her time in the form of a wasp. When the party comes within 30 yards of the tree, she commences harassing them. As she angrily buzzes above their heads, she first *castigates* them with rebuke for their neglect, then *animates wood* to cause the fallen branches to twist around their feet, then *causes paralysis* on a randomly chosen PC. If the PCs run, the bisan pursues them. If the bisan is swatted or otherwise attacked while in her wasp form, she quickly converts back to her humanoid form before taking damage.

If Kiki is with the party, after three rounds of harassment she uses her *know history* spell to reveal the reason behind the attack. At this point, the bisan ceases her assault and appears before them in the form of a beautiful woman. If Kiki is not present, the bisan continues her harassment for six rounds, then appears before them as a woman. If the PCs ask, she tells them the reason behind her attack.

The bisan is not entirely unreasonable. If the PCs sincerely explain the nature of their quest and assure her that they are not responsible for the drought, she will not renew her attacks. However, as proof of their sincerity, she insists that they offer one gourd of water to her tree. This will not save the tree, but the bisan accepts it as a symbolic gesture of goodwill.

If the PCs water the tree as asked, the bisan allows them to continue without interference. If they refuse, the bisan reverts to her insect form and continues her attacks as outlined above until the party is 100 yards away. She then returns to her dying tree.

10. The Third Golden Shrine.

> Barely concealed in the brush near the base of a range of large hills is a small structure with golden walls.

This is the third golden shrine. It is structurally identical to the shrine in encounter 3.

The shrine is unoccupied, and the PCs will have no difficulties taking the ivory bowl from its pedestal. However, once inside, they hear a faint voice coming from behind the shrine. It is a male voice, weakly chanting, "Bless this day . . . bless this day . . ." followed by seemingly random portions of sutras. There is no apparent source for the voice; in

fact, it seems to be coming from the ground outside.

The actual source of the voice is a goblin spider hidden behind the shrine in a tunnel covered by a trapdoor of sticks and weeds. The goblin spider is mimicking voices it has heard from worshipers. It has no idea what it is saying; it is using its mimicry to lure a victim close enough to grab.

Goblin spider: AC 4; MV 18"; HD 9; hp 63; #AT 2; Dmg 1-8/1-8; SA surprise, grasp; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; AL NE.

The goblin spider is aware of the location of the PCs from the vibrations of their movements. If a PC comes within 3' of its trapdoor, the spider springs out, surprising on a roll of 1-4 on 1d6. It attempts to grab the PC and drag him into its lair.

If no PC comes close to the trapdoor, and if the PCs linger in the area for more than 10 minutes, the goblin spider scrambles from its tunnel and attempts to snatch a PC. If the goblin spider loses more than half its hit points, it retreats back into its lair.

The entrance to the goblin spider's lair is a hole in the ground about 8' in diameter. This leads to a tunnel 15' deep which ends in an underground cave about 25' in diameter and 15' high. Any PC brave enough to battle the goblin spider in its lair does so at a penalty of −2 due to the stench and slippery surfaces in the cave.

Rummaging through the filth in the cave reveals a number of treasure items taken from previous victims: a leather purse containing 55 tael, a *katana +2,* and a *pearl of the rising tide.*

There are about four spoonsful of water in the ivory bowl. Each is equal to one dose of a potion of *heroism.*

11. Homestead in the Hills.

> The trail ends at the base of a range of towering hills. The rocky hillsides are sparsely covered with stunted trees and drying vegetation. A solitary sparrow circles overhead. There are no other signs of life.

The sparrow is actually one of the shan sao who have established a homestead in these hills. He is in this *polymorphed* form to watch for intruders. Having seen the party, he soars over the hills to warn the other shan sao.

A little searching by the PCs reveals a pass not far from the end of the trail that will lead them through the hills. When the PCs reach the summit, read the following:

> From this vantage, you see a vast valley below you filled with golden poppies. The poppy field is roughly circular and completely surrounded by high hills. A number of small piles of rubble and wood are evenly spaced around the valley's perimeter.

This valley of poppies is the Golden Bowl. It is about 200 yards in diameter and is located about 200' below the peaks of the hills.

The piles of rubble are the remnants of holy shrines which were demolished by the shan sao for materials to build their homes.

> About midway down the hillside is a dense bamboo grove. A group of 1'-tall men emerge from the grove, gibbering in a strange language and waving swords. They shout in your direction and run toward you.

The men are the last remaining members of a shan sao tribe who months ago migrated from the north to seek a new homestead.

Life here proved to be harsh, however, due to the scarcity of water, and most of the tribe has long since left. Only the hardiest and most stubborn still remain, and they intend to guard their hard-earned territory to the death if necessary.

Shan sao (9): AC 4; MV 6"/15"; HD 4; hp 28(×2), 24(×4), 20(×2), 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 or by weapon type; SA disease; SD summon tigers, immune to fear; AL CN.

Armed with short swords, six of these nine remaining shan sao race up the hill to meet the trespassing PCs. The other three have *polymorphed* into sparrows and circle behind the party.

The six humanoid shan sao stop in front of the party and demand in the trade language that they leave immediately. Any friendly overtures or attempts at explanation are cut off by the shan sao; they are in no mood to negotiate.

The shan sao thoroughly mistrust all outsiders, and any action taken by the PCs, including their hesitation, is taken as a threat to which the shan sao respond by attacking.

The six humanoid shan sao attack with their short swords. After one round of combat, one of the shan sao cries out loudly in a series of sharp, high-pitched shouts. This shouting summons a tiger who arrives six rounds later. In the third round of combat, the sparrows *polymorph* back into their humanoid forms and attempt to attack the PCs from behind with *cause disease.*

Tiger: AC 6; MV 12"; HD 5+5; hp 35; #AT 3; Dmg 2-5/2-5/1-10; SA rear claws for 2-8/2-8; SD surprised on 1 only; AL N.

Any shan sao who is disarmed also attempts to *cause disease.* The shan sao fight fiercely, but if more than half of them are killed, the rest *polymorph* into sparrows and fly away, never to be seen again. When it arrives, the tiger attacks with its teeth and claws. It continues to fight as long as there are shan sao present to fight with it.

If the PCs kill or drive off the shan sao and continue down the hillside, they see the crude houses of the shan sao as they pass near the bamboo grove. There is nothing of interest in the houses, but PCs may notice that some of the wooden planks used to make the walls are engraved with sutras.

12. The Golden Bowl. As the party nears the perimeter of the Golden Bowl, it becomes clear to them that the piles of rubble are actually the remnants of demolished shrines, equally spaced around the poppy field. Although the majority of the shrines have been destroyed, there are several still standing. All of the shrines are similar; they are humble wooden structures about 5' square with sutras engraved in the walls and a single figure of a 2' humanoid carved from a piece of wood centered in the floor.

The PCs may now carry out their instructions and deposit one spoonful of water from each of the ivory bowls into the Golden Bowl. It makes no difference where they deposit the water as long as it is inside the perimeter. If they do this, read the following:

> When the last spoonful of water touches the poppies in the Golden Bowl, the sky begins to darken and fill with clouds. Though there is no breeze, the poppies begin to sway back and forth.
>
> Bolts of lightning criss-cross the sky, accompanied by loud cracks of

thunder. An icy wind begins to blast, and the clouds rapidly change color, first gray, then gold, then pitch black.

The black clouds slowly descend until they cover the entire valley. An enormous crack of thunder hits you with the force of an explosion, then the wind begins to fade as the clouds gradually dissipate.

When the last of the clouds are gone, a small humanoid figure stands before you. He is 2′ tall, with bronze skin and long red hair. The figure holds a wooden club. "Well, here I am," he says in a high, squeaky voice. "What do you want?"

This is the p'oh, the spirit responsible for the drought. Although he has watched over this area for many centuries, he became furious when the shrines dedicated to him were demolished. The reasons for their destruction are irrelevant to him, and he has indignantly retaliated by using his power to *create drought* for indiscriminate punishment.

P'oh: AC 4; MV 6″; HD 5; hp 30; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 or by weapon type; SA *create drought,* drying touch; SD +1 or better weapons to hit; become *invisible* at will; AL CE.

If asked, the p'oh matter-of-factly takes credit for the drought. "What did you expect?" he sniffs. The p'oh ignores all explanations or requests for help from the PCs. "Your problems are of no concern to me. Besides, you are hardly showing the proper respect for a spirit of my stature."

The p'oh is very susceptible to flattery. Only when he feels he has received sufficient apologies for the destruction of his shrines will he relent. If the PCs aren't willing to play along and do a little grovelling, or if they attempt to attack, the p'oh vanishes. Unless the PCs have enough sacred waters to recall him, he will not reappear.

If the PCs do make an effort to soothe his ego with profuse apologies or suitable offerings of food or valuables (he is partial to precious gems and metals), the p'oh smiles broadly and says, "Very well. I forgive you." If they promise to repair his shrines, he will end the drought.

The p'oh then vanishes. Within minutes, the PCs see fat storm clouds gather overhead and soon will feel the first drops of rain splash on their skin.

Concluding the Adventure

If the PCs are unable to make peace with the p'oh or aren't able to summon him in the first place, but are able to drive off the shan sao and repair the shrines, the p'oh relents anyway and calls off the drought a month later. If the shrines go unrepaired and the shan sao stay put, the drought continues indefinitely.

The journey back to the village of Ashu H'San is uneventful, although the DM is free to have the party experience any encounters they might have bypassed or battle any monsters they didn't finish off.

The party may keep any of the sacred waters they have left and use them as magical potions in future adventures. They may also keep the ivory bowls and the ivory spoon; the bowls are worth 300 ch'ien each and the spoon is worth 100 ch'ien.

If the PCs succeed in ending the drought, they receive the heartfelt thanks of a grateful community and a reward of 1,000 ch'ien from their daimyo for a job well done. Ω

THE GHOSTSHIP GAMBIT

BY RANDY MAXWELL

The first thing you'll hear is dead silence.

Artwork by Wanda Lybarger
Cartography by Diesel

Randy Maxwell lives in Odessa, Texas (which he describes as "Mayberry with angst"). He says the idea for this adventure came from an old war movie whose plot revolved around a WWII German warship that used various disguises to approach Allied merchant ships. Once the ship was in close, the disguise was discarded, the victim attacked and sunk. "This just goes to show that good adventure ideas can be found anywhere," Randy says. His module "White Death" appeared in DUNGEON™ *issue #8.*

"The Ghostship Gambit" is a D&D® game adventure for four to six characters of 3rd-6th level. The adventurers should be of varied classes and include at least one elf. Dungeon Masters will find it helpful to reread the section of the *Expert Rulebook* (pages 42-44) dealing with waterborne adventures.

No wandering monsters or random encounters should be used with this adventure, as they will slow the game and disrupt continuity of play.

The names of towns, locations, or people can easily be changed to suit any existing campaign. DMs using the Known World of the D&D game may wish to place this adventure in either the city of Mule Beach or the port of Sea Camel (see module X6 *Quagmire!*) or any town of under 5,000 population. Larger cities, such as Slagovich or Specularum, would not need the services of a small party of adventurers as they have powerful militias and high-level magic-users and clerics on the public payroll who are well-equipped to deal with any waterborne menace. Smaller cities and towns simply cannot afford to hire mercenaries or pay large bounties.

Adventure Background

Player characters should be adventuring in or near the port city of Koll (or some similar city as described above) before entering this adventure. If the PCs are near the city, they hear tales of a terrible ghostship attacking the ships of Koll. More important, the adventurers hear of the bounty on the ghostship. Once in the city, PCs can gather more information by visiting any of the local gathering spots. The port masters have placed bounty posters in all the local taverns and inns, as well as other well-trafficked areas:

The Masters of the port of Koll offer, pledge, and otherwise guarantee a total of 10,000 gp to any group of brave and noble souls willing to rid the local sea lanes of a dread menace. Payment of bounty on proof of destruction of said menace. Apply Port Masters' Offices, Waterfront, Koll.

DMs may wish to copy the poster on a separate piece of paper and hand it to the players. It is common knowledge that the rumored ghostship is the "menace" mentioned in the poster.

For the Dungeon Master

Koll is a busy but rather out-of-the-way trade port. It has an excellent deep-water harbor and is a stopping-off point on a major caravan route. The docks are almost always busy as inland goods are loaded on ships bound up and down the coast, while other ships unload goods to be carried overland to the interior. Ships leave and arrive daily, and the land caravans do the same.

All this activity makes Koll appear richer than it actually is. Adventurers examining the ships and their cargoes notice many in poor condition. While some of the merchandise is valuable, a great deal is not. Many of the cargoes waiting on the docks are cheap goods: large kegs of rotgut mead; thin, watery wine and sour beer; piles of poorly made furniture; bolts of coarse cloth; boxes of inexpensive earthenware; etc.

Most of the ships hauling these goods are no better than tramp freighters. These ships are of many types (sailing ships, galleys, etc.) but are all in poor condition. With well-patched sails, warped deck planking, and barnacle-encrusted sides, these homely but still seaworthy vessels run the coastal trade routes, eking out a living for their captains and crews.

But not all cargo leaving and entering the port of Koll comes by tramp ship. Occasionally, a war galley arrives as escort for prosperous ships carrying valuable goods. Or alone, a fearless, well-kept, and trim merchantman leaves with a valuable load. If, however, PCs try to hire a ship to pursue the ghostship, only tramps are available, never a well-kept vessel.

As the ghostship is the talk of the town, PCs are able to pick up information in every tavern, ship, and inn. DMs should not simply give players the information, but should role-play the parts of shopkeepers, bartenders, and patrons of various establishments. By asking polite questions, the PCs can discover the following factual information:

— The ghostship attacks only weak, unprotected vessels and seems to be able to tell these from better armed ships.

— The port masters are in a hurry to be rid of the ghostship because port business is falling off, resulting in a loss of revenues.

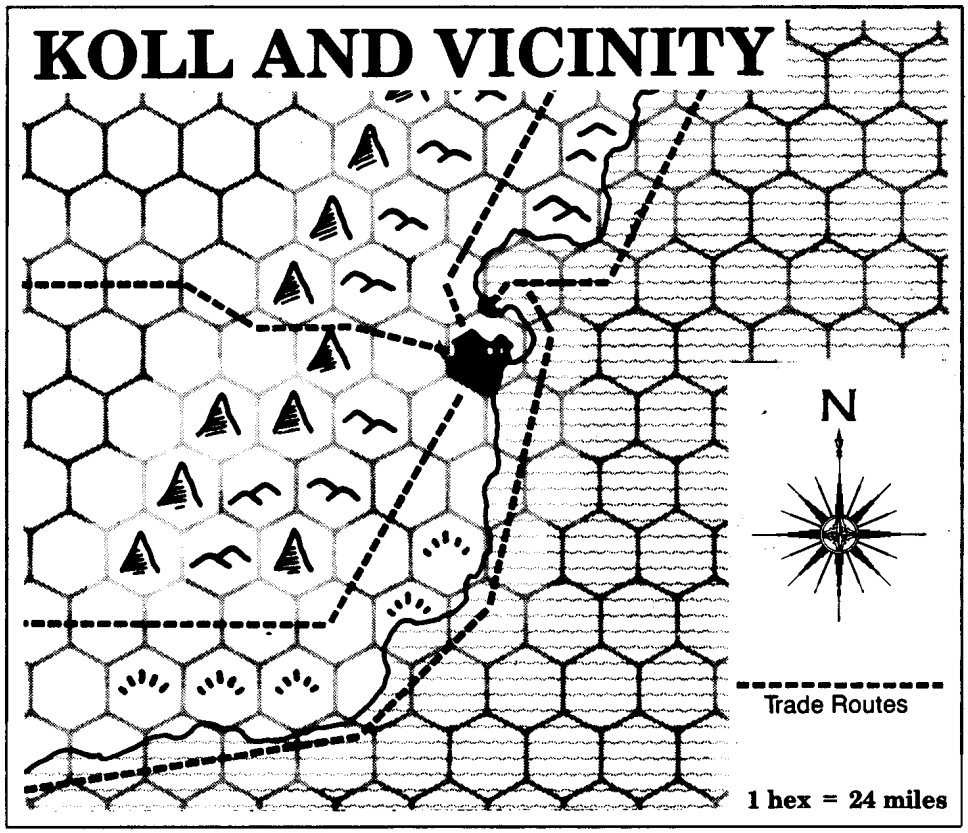
— Merchants, craftsmen, and the seamen's guild are complaining loudly about the rise in freight rates, loss of merchandise, and danger to crews. There have been calls for the ouster of the port masters.

— The ghostship is interested in ships' cargo only. Ships are never destroyed, and seamen are not taken as slaves or food. Crews are allowed to abandon their vessels, and the ships themselves are usually found the next day, floating lifeless with empty holds.

— The local militia has tried several times — unsuccessfully — to deal with the ghostship. Shortly after the first attack, a troop of militia set out in a harbor patrol boat to find the menace. And they did find it — or rather, it found them. The troopers reported that a dead silence fell just before a grisly craft, all rotting and hung with seaweed, breached the surface of the water about 50′ off their starboard bow. The ship appeared to be abandoned; there was no one on deck. It merely bobbed up and down in the water for several minutes, as if it were looking them over, then silently sank below the waves again. After that, no more patrol boats were sent out, but one or two harbor patrollmen were added to the crew of each ship that put out of Koll harbor. No ship carrying a harbor patrolman has ever been attacked by the ghostship, although it has been sighted several times.

The PCs hear this information repeated wherever they go, and the need for haste in dealing with this menace comes across loud and clear. The adventurers can easily check out the truth of all the above information.

When the PCs first visit the water-



front, an abandoned freighter is being towed into port. Longshoremen on the docks reveal that many of the crewmen who abandoned the vessel were sighted two days ago on a beach many miles away; a rescue ship has been dispatched to pick them up.

PCs also hear many rumors about the ghostship and its terrible crew. The ghostship is a hot topic in town, but the party has no way to check the validity of these rumors as no one in town can give positive confirmation or denial. Roll 1d20 and consult the following table twice per PC per game day. Several PCs may hear the same rumor, or a single character may hear the same rumor twice or more.

Rumor Table

1. The ghostship's crew is led by a powerful vampire. (False.)
2. Clerics have no power over the undead crew of the ghostship. (True.)
3. Magic of any kind will not work against the ghostship. (False.)
4. The ghostship is in league with a storm giant, and the two share the loot. (False.)
5. The ghostship attacks only at night. (False.)
6. There is more than one ghostship. (False.)
7. The ghostship's crew can control the weather. (False.)
8. The crew of the ghostship use magical items. (True.)
9. At least half the ghostship's crew are bone golems. (False.)
10. The leader of the ghostship's crew can conjure and control water elementals. (False.)
11. Somewhere on the bottom of the ocean is a huge pile of treasure collected by the ghostship. (False.)
12. There is a large amount of gold and jewels on the ghostship itself. (False.)
13. The ghostship can be diverted from attacking by throwing a small amount of treasure overboard. (False.)
14. The ghostship is equipped with a large catapult. (False.)
15. Only several patriarchs working together will be able to destroy the ghostship. (False.)
16. The creatures on the ghostship are from another plane of existence and are immune to both normal and magical weapons. (False.)
17. The ghostship can be destroyed by a *dispel evil* spell followed by a *bless* spell. (False.)
18. There are only 10 of the creatures (whatever they are) aboard the ghostship. (True.)
19. The ghostship uses trained sharks to attack any victims they find in the water. (False.)
20. The masters of the port of Koll have secretly sent for a high-level magic-user, in the hope that the wizard can rid them of the ghostship by some powerful blast of sorcery. (False.)

The adventurers will probably want to talk to a survivor of one of the ghostship's attacks. PCs who ask the whereabouts of an eyewitness are directed to a local tavern to talk to **Jackie Barbarosa** (AC 9; F2; hp 11; MV 120' (40'); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; Save F2; ML 8; AL LN).

Jackie tells his story with frequent interruptions to call loudly for more ale. He sometimes drains his tankard and states simply, "My cup's empty." Then he will not continue with his tale until the PCs have refilled his cup. Here, minus the interruptions, is the old seaman's story:

> "We were a day out from Koll, on a filthy barge of a galley called *Effete Efreet.* She was hauling ingots of tin and bars of unworked iron upcoast aways. We kept close in, as near the shore as was safe, so you could spit and hit sand. It was sundown, and we was sure we'd given Old Ghosty the slip and it'd be easy going from there on. I was relaxing aft, and I'd just shut my eyes for a wink or two. Then it happened, all at once like.
>
> "A dead silence fell. You could just make out in the last light of the sun, men opening their mouths to holler and no noise coming out. Nor sound of sea, nor creak of the ship . . . just silence. Then I could see a gurgling and a swirling in the water to starboard, and rising up alongside — a ship!
>
> "All gray she was, worm-eaten and rotten. Slime and ooze slithering down her rigging, water pouring off her deck. When the lads saw that, most of 'em were off and away, over the port side and heading for shore. Me, the captain, and a few more stout lads tried to make a stand amidship. Old Ghosty just stood off from us, matching us speed for speed, turn for turn.
>
> "Then, in the almost dark, a light flared bright and clear on the ghostship. And I could see then, plain as plain can be. There they was, as terrible and cold as anything I'd ever imagined — the crew of Old Ghosty. Eyes all aglittering, hair all wet and green and slimy, they just stared at us. Then, one of the grizzly things points at us and that was the end of it. We went mad. All I remember after that is terror. We was all gripped by the blackest fear, you wouldn't wish it on your worst enemy. Over the side we went, even the captain, and I wouldn't be surprised if some of them poor lads aren't running yet.
>
> "They found the *Efreet* next day, her hold empty. They found most of us the day after and brought us in. I believe one or two of the lads was never found. No more can I tell you, for no more do I know."

Jackie is a seaman, not an adventurer. He is unable to tell the PCs what type of creatures, living or dead, crewed the ghostship. If the PCs press Jackie hard on the type of creatures that attacked his ship, he simply repeats that part of his tale describing them. Tell the PCs that the creatures were terrible and cold, grizzly things. Give the PCs only the most general of information. If players grumble about this, remind them that Jackie is a seaman, not an expert on monsters, and that he was, by his own account, terrified during the encounter, thus clouding his memory.

Hiring a Boat

PCs will have to rent a vessel of some kind if they do not already own one. Even if the PCs have a ship, they may wish to rent another rather than risk their own. The owners of idle freighters can be found in taverns, inns, and eateries near the docks. Ships can be rented by the month at 10% of their cost, plus a sizeable deposit. The DM should check the Water Transport Table on page 19 of the *Expert Rulebook* to find the cost of any vessel. For example, the table lists the cost of a small sailing ship at 5,000 gp. Thus, one month's rental of a small sailing ship is 500 gp (10% of 5,000 gp). Ship owners rent their vessels at only the monthly rate,

not for weekly or daily rates, although the DM may wish to make an exception for PCs on a tight budget.

If PCs wish to buy rather than rent a ship, refer to the Water Transport Table. The price of any vessel, regardless of its condition, is as listed.

All of the idle ships in Koll harbor available for rent or purchase are of the tramp variety. PCs will want to know the names, costs, and capacities of the available tramp freighters, so the DM should prepare a short list.

The cost of renting or purchasing a ship covers the vessel only; captains, navigators, and crews must be hired separately, and at premium wages. Seamen of all types can be found virtually anywhere in Koll. The DM should consult the specialist section of the *Expert Rulebook* (page 26) for the cost of hiring seamen. As the hunt for the ghostship is regarded as dangerous duty, the cost of hiring seamen is twice the amounts listed. PCs will be unable to hire mercenaries. Any mercenaries in Koll are not interested in fighting a ghostship at any price.

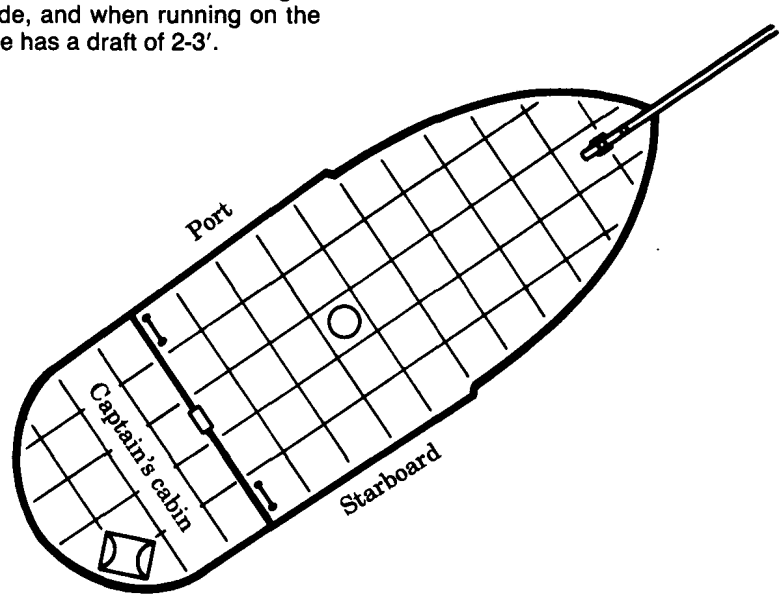
The captain or a spokesman for the crew will make it plain to the adventurers that any difficulties the PCs get themselves into, the PCs will have to get themselves out of. Under no circumstances will a hired crew fight in place of the PCs, and the DM should not allow PCs to use NPCs as cannon fodder. A hired crew will take care of the ship and fight only if attacked. The crewmen defend themselves in a fighting withdrawal until they may safely quit the battle. A hired crew will not pursue a beaten enemy.

The number of seamen needed depends directly on the size of the vessel acquired by the PCs. Consult the Water Movement Chart on page 43 of the *Expert Rulebook*. All seamen hired by the PCs are 1st-level fighters with no armor, average morale (7), and only daggers for weapons. The DM may allow higher-level NPCs — 2nd-, 3rd-, or 4th-level fighters — as navigators and captains. Higher-level NPCs also have no armor, average morale (7), and are armed with daggers. Most of the seamen in Koll are of Lawful alignment.

Once the PCs have secured a ship and crew, they are ready to search for the ghostship. Weather factors can either be ignored or the DM can use the Water Movement Modification Chart on page 44 of the *Expert Rulebook*.

THE UNDERSEA BOAT

The undersea boat is 30′ in length, 10′ wide, and when running on the surface has a draft of 2-3′.



1 square = 2′

The Ghostship

The ghostship plaguing Koll is, in reality, an *undersea boat* (see end of module). Pirates have disguised the boat as a ghostship, using pieces of rotting hulks they found on the ocean bottom. Garbed in old, rotten clothing and greasepaint, the pirates disguise themselves to appear as a crew of undead. So far, their secret has never been discovered.

It is important that the DM make no mention of pirates until the PCs discover the nature of the ghostship's crew for themselves. It is also very important to avoid deliberately misleading the players. The DM should say only that the ghostship's crew "look like zombies," or that they "appear to be undead," not "the zombies are led by two ghouls," or "the undead attack." If any players complain of being deceived, remind them that no one in Koll, even eyewitnesses, had ever seen through the pirates' disguises. It was, therefore, impossible for the people of Koll to describe the marauder as anything other than a ghostship.

The pirates are led by a 5th-level human magic-user, Sork the Enchanter. Sork is the undisputed captain of the *undersea boat*. He is intelligent and greedy, but will seldom let his greed overcome his common sense. Sork cares little what damage he does or evil he causes, so long as his own desires for wealth and comfort are met.

Sork the Enchanter: AC 8; MU 5; hp 14; MV 120′ (40′); #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; Save MU5; ML 9; AL C; S 9, I 16, W 14, D 10, C 11, Ch 12; spells: *charm person, magic missile, invisibility, web, hold person;* magical items: *ring of protection +1, wand of fear.*

The second in command of the pirates is Bryndle, a 4th-level human cleric. Vicar Bryndle is also the ship's navigator. Bryndle serves Sork because it serves his own interests. Like Sork, Bryndle is greedy, but unlike Sork, his greed often overcomes his better judgment. If the price is right, Bryndle is willing to do just about anything.

Bryndle the Vicar: AC 5; C4; hp 18; MV 120′ (40′); #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; Save C4; ML 9; AL C; S 12, I 10, W 15, D 9, C 12, Ch 8; *leather*

armor +2; mace; spells: *cause fear, light, silence 15' radius.*

Sork and Bryndle disguise themselves as ghouls. The crew of the fake ghostship consists entirely of eight aquatic elves (see end of module) disguised as zombies. These particular aquatic elves are exiles, outlawed from their ocean clan for allowing some injury to come to its revered frond keeper. Even an elf PC will not be able to get the full story from these aquatic elves. The morale of the exiles is very low. They serve Sork out of fear and because they have no place else to go.

The aquatic elves have spells that are primarily defensive (*shield, invisibility,* etc.) or for detection (*detect magic, locate object,* etc.). If the adventuring party is very strong, the DM can beef up the elves' spells with more offensive ones or raise the level of some of the elves. The 2 HD elves have short swords, and the 3 HD elves carry spears.

Aquatic Elves (8): AC 5; HD 3 (×4), 2 (×4); hp 16, 14, 12 (×2), 10, 8 (×2), 6; MV 120' (40'); #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; Save E3 or E2; ML 5; AL N.

The pirates attack exactly the same way every time. They position the *undersea boat* directly below the ship they are about to attack. Bryndle then casts his *silence* spell onto a starfish or some other small ocean dweller. The *silenced* starfish is then pinned to the hull of the hapless merchant ship with a dagger. The attacked vessel only knows that a sudden dead silence has fallen.

The pirates then rise slowly out of the sea about 50' away from their victim. At first, the merchant seamen see only a rotting and worm-eaten wreck rising slowly from the depths. The pirates remain hidden below deck until their craft has fully surfaced. They then rush forth in their hideous disguises and let their victims get a good look at what is attacking. At this point, most crews begin abandoning ship.

If any sailors attempt to stand and defend their ship, Sork uses his *wand of fear,* effectively breaking any resistance. If the defenders somehow still hold their ground and appear to be well armed and armored, Sork avoids the battle. In the face of stout opposition, Sork submerges his boat without attempting a fight. PCs will need to remain hidden, *invisible,* or disguised if they wish to battle Sork and his crew. Remember, no spells may be cast or command words spoken — by PCs or pirates — within the *silenced* area.

Only after most of the crew has abandoned ship will the pirates grapple and board (see page 44 of the *Expert Rulebook*). The DM can use the deck plan provided for the *undersea boat* or create his own using the same dimensions. Plans for the PCs' boat will have to be drawn depending on the vessel rented or purchased.

In combat, the aquatic elves' favorite tactic is to bear hug an opponent (normal "to hit" roll), then dive into the sea. Once in the water, the victim is released to either sink or swim. The pirates do not take captives; anyone surrendering is stripped of valuables and tossed overboard. Heavily encumbered PCs who dive or are dragged into the sea must rid themselves of heavy objects and armor before they can safely swim to shore.

Once the pirates take control of a ship they loot it, throwing overboard anything they cannot use or carry. The empty freighter is then set adrift, and the booty is hidden on some deserted stretch of shore until a buyer can be found for the goods.

It is during combat with the pirates that PCs should realize they are not dealing with undead. Adventurers should notice that the so-called zombies are attacking with normal initiative. When describing the fake zombies, the DM should point out their blue or green hair and tell the PCs that all the zombielike beings appear to have neck wounds. Any character who examines one of these wounds realizes it is a gill slit. Also, the false undead bleed when cut. Zombies with bleeding wounds should be a dead giveaway to even the most inexperienced adventurers.

It will be obvious when Sork and Bryndle attack with weapons and not claws that they are not ghouls. Also, their attacks do not cause paralysis as ghoul attacks, although Sork may use his *hold person* spell to fake this effect.

If the battle turns against Sork, he attempts to cut the grappling ropes and get away. If Sork is able to cut free the lines and submerge, the elves dive overboard and join him underwater. If Sork is killed or captured, the elves immediately surrender. Killing or capturing Bryndle has no great effect on the elves. Only Sork and Bryndle know the command words for controlling the *undersea boat.*

If the PCs defeat the pirates, they find a locked chest bolted to the floor of the captain's cabin on the *undersea boat.* This chest is not trapped, and Sork has the key hidden in his robes. The chest contains Sork's spell book, with all those spells he has memorized plus *read magic* and *light.* There is also a scroll containing the command words for the *undersea boat* (see end of module). The scroll lists only the command words, not what each word does, so PCs will have to use trial and error if they use this scroll. The chest also contains five gems in a leather pouch (500 gp each), a small silver statue of a horse and rider (worth 500 gp), a ruby ring (1,000 gp), and a sack containing 600 gp.

The *wand of fear* and the *ring of protection +1* can be taken from Sork. As Sork has used the wand often, there are only five charges left. The command word ("Phobos") for the wand is written on its shaft, but a *read magic* spell is required to understand the script.

Concluding the Adventure

If attacked by Sork, the PCs are likely to find themselves abandoned by their hired crew (DM should make a morale check at −2). As all attacks take place near busy sea lanes, PCs who cannot sail the ship themselves can hail another vessel and be towed to the nearest port. Local ships are especially glad to help the PCs if they have defeated what was believed to be the ghostship.

PCs unable to defeat Sork and his crew but discovering that they are pirates, not undead, are paid 1,000 gp by the port masters of Koll for this information. PCs unable to defeat the pirates or discover the secret of the ghostship should probably move on to simpler adventures.

PCs must bring the *undersea boat* back to Koll as proof that they have defeated the menace. With this proof, the port masters gladly pay the bounty. The masters also allow the PCs to keep any and all treasure they took from the pirates, but claim the *undersea boat* in recompense for damages done by Sork and Bryndle. If the PCs refuse to turn over the *undersea boat* and its command words, the port masters order their arrest. Koll has a well-trained civil guard, so the adventurers have little choice but to turn over the *boat.*

Aquatic elves surviving as prisoners are sentenced by the authorities to work in the port. With their water-breathing

ability, the elves are able to inspect the underwater condition of ships and docks as well as do minor repairs. The elves are glad to stay, for without Sork they have nowhere to go. Besides, the work is much safer and easier than pirating. Sork and Bryndle, if captured, are sentenced to 20 years as galley slaves.

The defeat of the "ghostship" is cause for celebration in Koll. The PCs are guests of honor (if they have turned over the *undersea boat*) at a huge feast at which they are made honorary members of the local seamen's guild and given a symbolic "key to the city." This key is 4′ long, made of carved wood painted gold. It weighs 15 lbs., has no intrinsic value, and cannot be disposed of within 20 miles of Koll without offending the city and its inhabitants.

If the DM wishes to expand on this adventure, the port masters of Koll may allow the PCs to rent the *undersea boat* in order to search for sunken treasure (after leaving a suitably large deposit for the *boat's* return). The masters will want a percentage of all treasure brought up. If the PCs forfeit their deposit and do not return the *undersea boat,* city officials immediately dispatch a troop of seawise guardsmen to hunt them down.

With the sea lanes cleared, brigands may begin attacking the caravan routes near Koll, forcing the port masters to issue another bounty. Other adventures could include the escape of Sork and Bryndle, and their pursuit of vengeance against the PCs.

Elf, Aquatic

Armor Class:	5
Hit Dice:	1* or more
Move:	120′(40′)
swimming	240′(60′)
Attacks:	1 hand or 1 weapon
Damage:	1-4 or by weapon
No. Appearing:	1-6 (4-24)
Save As:	Elf:1
Morale:	10
Intelligence:	13
Alignment:	Neutral
XP Value:	13

Aquatic elves live in the vast oceans of the world, making their homes in great caverns in lagoon bottoms and reefs. They resemble land elves in their facial features, but the gill slits in their necks and their green or blue hair set them apart from other elves. Like normal elves, they can all use magical spells. Aquatic elves use the same spell lists as normal elves.

Their culture is similar to their air-breathing counterparts. Each settlement has a large seaweed frond (equivalent of a Tree of Life) which is nurtured and cared for by the frond keeper, a 10th-level aquatic elf. Their spacious homes are always aesthetically pleasing; many different types of seaweed are planted and cultivated to create beautiful undersea groves and forests.

Aquatic elves can hide so well in weeds and reefs that they are effectively invisible (only a 5% chance of being seen) as long as they remain motionless.

Although they can breathe both water and air, aquatic elves rarely leave the safety of the seas. However, they have been known to trade with land elves, exchanging pearls and potions of *water breathing* for metal goods. They are the mortal enemies of sharks and sahuagin, and dislike fishermen, especially those who (often unknowingly) bother them by fishing near their lairs. They are quite friendly with dolphins.

Undersea Boat

This item appears identical to a 30′-long standard riverboat (see *Expert Rulebook,* page 42) and can be used as one. As it is magical, however, its armor class is 4 and it has 40 hull points. No rowers or sailors are required if the command words are known.

The command words for the *undersea boat* are simple anagrams:

Start	=	Ratts
Stop	=	Opts
Turn to port	=	Runt potrot
To starboard	=	Burnt toast odarr
Stop turning	=	Piston grunt
Submerge	=	Rubes gem
Level off	=	Elf ov elf
Surface	=	Fur aces

When underwater, the *boat* radiates a *water breathing* effect, protecting all passengers and crew as long as they touch the *boat.* The *undersea boat* can be fitted with grips so that passengers won't drift away. Ω

THE PLIGHT OF CIRRIA

BY GRANT AND DAVID BOUCHER

An Arch-Mage who can kidnap a dragon is one tough Arch-Mage.

Artwork by Valerie Valusek
Cartography by Diesel

By the time this adventure sees print, Grant Boucher will have graduated from college with a bachelor's degree in English and a minor in physics. David Boucher has begun college and is currently interested in Vikings and Norse mythology. Both Bouchers are prolific writers whose modules have previously appeared in DUNGEON™ Adventures. *Look for Grant's work in WG7* Castle Greyhawk.

"The Plight of Cirria" is a high-level AD&D® game adventure for 6-10 characters of 8-12th level. The party must be of generally good alignment and should contain at least two fighters and two clerics. Since the majority of the adventure deals with tracking a magic-user through dense jungle, a ranger or druid might be of great help.

This adventure has been designed to fit easily within any campaign world. All that is required is a large, unexplored tropical forest.

For the Dungeon Master

Some mages dedicate their entire lives to torture, demonology, and increasing the pain and suffering of those foolish enough to cross their paths. Ezoran the Deceiver is just such a mage.

Ezoran grew up in the slums of the great free city of Pefrehan, where he spent many years struggling to survive. Always fond of playing pranks on others, his tricks gradually became more and more dangerous. Eventually, he became notorious with the local authorities. He was ready to leave town for good in search of adventure when a long-lost uncle showed up bearing great wealth. Ezoran left town with his uncle the next day and was never seen or heard from again in Pefrehan.

They disappeared into the mountains, and Ezoran spent the next 10 years learning the secrets of black magic from his new mentor. Eventually, his uncle passed on and left Ezoran with a wealth of spells and knowledge. He proceeded to acquire more and more power, and eventually set out in search of a home.

Ezoran had always been jealous of those creatures who dwelled amid the clouds above him. After years of failed spell research, he finally gave up hope of creating a cloud fortress of his own, and he set out to steal one.

Imperion, an aging cloud giant, soon found himself in the unfavorable position of owning a home that an angry Arch-Mage greedily wanted for himself.

He quickly lost the battle and was imprisoned in his own dungeon.

Ezoran now had his own cloud castle, but he was still not satisfied. He desired to know how the castle was built and what kept it afloat, and he tortured Imperion to learn what spells were needed for such a construction. Imperion hadn't lived so long just to reveal the secret of the clouds to an evil wizard; giants are made of stern stuff. Despite Ezoran's best efforts, he was unable to break Imperion's will. Even his mind-reading spells were ineffective against such an ancient and well-conditioned mind. The giant's body, however, was not in as good shape as was his mind, and eventually Ezoran's tortures took their toll. Imperion died, robbing the mage of any chance to gain the giant's secrets.

Beaten but not out, Ezoran searched his books and his memory for days until an idea came to him. Many years ago, when he was still young and inexperienced, he had come upon the lair of Cumulus, a cloud dragon. Ezoran was initially friendly with the dragon, but his greed soon overtook him and he was caught stealing from the hoard. The dragon soundly defeated the young mage. Ezoran may have lost then — "But now," he thought, "I can kill that dragon with a snap of my fingers. Better yet, I could capture the dragon and get the secret of the cloud castles from him."

Ezoran easily located the ancient dragon's cloud lair and prepared for the assault. Later that evening, he flew in with spells ready. Unfortunately for the mage, he'd been a bit too presumptuous about the dragon's current status. Since their last meeting, the ancient male dragon had found a mate and now had two children as well. The battle nearly cost the evil mage his life, and he again retreated in defeat.

The dragons believed Ezoran was gone forever — but the Arch-Mage was not so easily discouraged. He had learned much about the dragons, and after preparing new spells and fully equipping himself for another battle, he set about to ambush Cumulus. With relatively little effort, he followed Cumulus from his cave one morning, defeated him in single combat, and imprisoned his vanquished foe in a *prison of Zagyg*. He fled with the dragon to parts unknown, leaving Cumulus's mate, Cirria, and their children, Nimbus and Stratos, confused and alone.

Cirria has no way to trace her husband except one lone clue torn from the mage in the earlier battle: a small, symbol-laden map. Wanting to go after the mage herself, but unable to leave her children alone, she must swallow her pride and enlist the aid of others . . . namely, adventurers.

Starting the Adventure

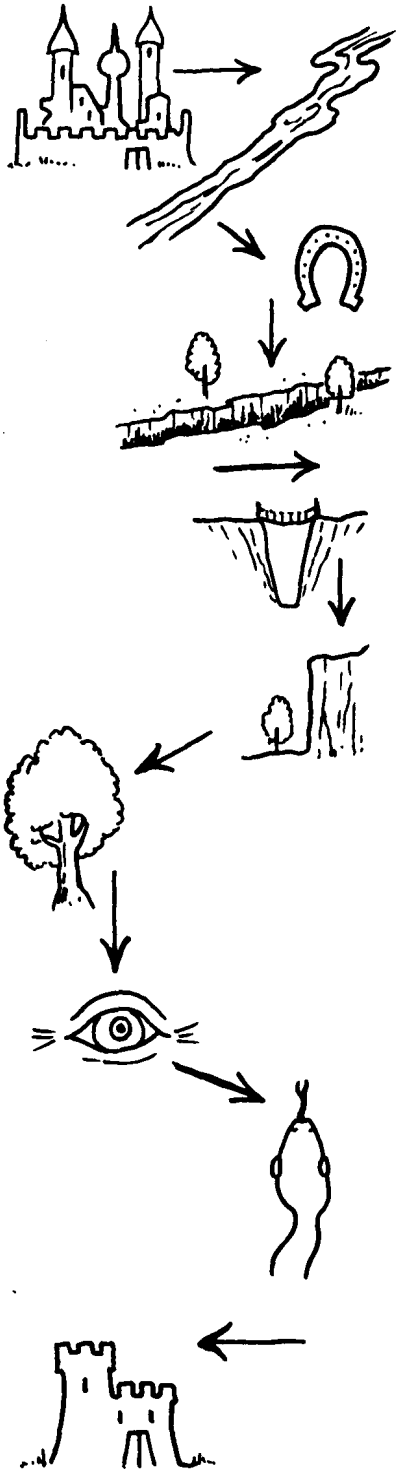
Cirria drinks a potion of *polymorph self* from her treasure hoard and assumes the form of a sad young woman with pale-gray skin, desperately in need of powerful assistance. She attempts to contact a druid or ranger before any other PC classes. Once in touch with the PCs and in a relatively private place, Cirria reveals her true nature and the general events of the past few days. She knows only that a human mage attacked her family a few days before her mate's disappearance. She did not see the mage's face and knows nothing about him. "He" could even be female — Cirria just doesn't know. Her only hope is that the map leads to the mage's stronghold.

The map is on ordinary parchment, drawn by Ezoran when he first set out to locate Imperion's fortress. He has no idea that he left it in the dragons' lair and assumes that he has misplaced it amongst his numerous papers and tomes. There is no scale on the map and no descriptions to accompany the otherwise straightforward symbols (see Ezoran's Map). The map can be followed only by going from landmark to landmark.

Cirria offers the PCs anything within her power to grant as payment for the safe return of Cumulus. If the party decides to help, her pale-gray complexion noticeably changes to rosy-pink, and she eagerly hands over the map. (The DM should make a copy of Ezoran's Map for the PCs.) Cirria then arranges a meeting place where a message can be left as to the mission's success or failure. She will not, under any circumstances, give the location of her lair.

Cirria, a medium-sized, very old, female cloud dragon: AC0 or −3; MV 6″/39″; HD 13; hp 91; #AT 4; Dmg 1-10/1-10/3-36/3-12; SA breath weapon, magic use; SD magic use, 50% magic resistance when gaseous; AL N. Her two children are twins, one male and one female. Dragon twins are completely unheard of among human sages, though some demi-human sages have lived long enough to hear of such an

EZORAN'S MAP



Not to scale

occurrence. The twins require very special care and feeding. They are very weak and helpless for their age (around four years old) and cannot be left alone for very long. Cirria, therefore, cannot join the party in its quest.

As time goes on, Cumulus grows weaker and weaker from Ezoran's tortures. Left with 90 hp by the time he arrived at Ezoran's cloud fortress, he loses 3 hp more per day of captivity. This gives the PCs 29 days to rescue him from a fate worse than death: Should Cumulus fall to 3 hp, Ezoran *polymorphs* him into a kelubar demondand. There is a 5% chance per day thereafter that Cumulus's mind changes to that of a demondand. If this occurs, Ezoran enslaves him for use as another guard for the fortress.

Jungle Random Encounters

Random encounters in the jungle occur on a roll of 1 on 1d6. Check each six-hour period (roll twice each day and twice each night) or at the discretion of the DM. If an encounter is indicated, roll 1d8 to see what occurs, or the DM may choose an encounter. Each encounter occurs only once. The DM should feel free to add to or modify these tables to suit the party involved and the nature of the campaign.

Daytime Encounters

1. 1-4 **cifals** (AC 6; MV 6"; HD 8 or 10; hp 51-60; #AT 1; Dmg 1-12; SD reduced damage from edged weapons; AL N).

2. 1-3 **shambling mounds** (AC 0; MV 6"; HD 9; hp 54 each; #AT 2; Dmg 2-16/2-16; SA suffocation; SD weapons do half damage; AL N).

3. 1-2 **will-o-(the)-wisps** (AC −8; MV 18"; HD 9; hp 60 each; #AT 1; Dmg 2-16; SA lures prey; SD immune to most spells; AL CE).

4. 1-4 **giant poisonous snakes** (AC 5; MV 15"; HD 4+2; hp 25 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1-3; SA poison; AL N).

5. 1-4 **algoids** (AC 5; MV 6"; HD 5; hp 25 each; #AT 2; Dmg 1-10/1-10; SD immune to edged weapons of less than +2 bonus, immune to *fireballs* and *lightning;* AL CN).

6. 2-8 **wyverns** (AC 3; MV 6"/24"; HD 7+7; hp 41-60; #AT 2; Dmg 1-6/1-6; SA poison; AL NE).

7. 2-5 **giant scorpions** (AC 3; MV 15"; HD 5+5; hp 35 each; #AT 3; Dmg 1-10/1-10/1-4; SA poison sting; AL N).

8. 1-4 **boggarts** (AC −6; MV 18"; HD 6; hp 35 each; #AT 1; Dmg 2-12; SA energy bolt; SD *confusion* and *invisibility,* immune to most spells; AL CE).

Nighttime Encounters

1. 1-2 **will-o-(the)-wisps** (as above).

2. 1-4 **boggarts** (as above).

3. 1 **ghost** (AC 0 or 8; MV 9"; HD 10; hp 60; #AT 1; Dmg age 10-40 years; SA aging; SD etherealness; AL LE).

4. 2-7 **giant bats** (AC 8; MV 3"/18"; HD ½; hp 4 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1-2; SA rabies (1% chance); AL N).

5. 1 **magnesium spirit** (AC 0; MV 36"; HD 6+1; hp 35; #AT 1; Dmg 3-12; SA energy and strength drain; SD only hit by silver or magical weapons, limited spell immunity; AL LE).

6. 1-4 **jackalweres** (AC 4; MV 12"; HD 4; hp 25 each; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SA gaze causes sleep; SD iron or +1 weapon to hit; AL CE).

7. 1-4 **minotaur lizards** (AC-5; MV 6"; HD 8; hp 50 each; #AT 3; Dmg 2-12/2-12/3-18; AL N).

8. 2-5 **displacer beasts** (AC 4; MV 15"; HD 6; hp 35 each; #AT 2; Dmg 2-8/2-8; SD opponents are −2 on attacks; AL N).

The Journey

Since there are no distance markers on Ezoran's map, and the cloud fortress is magically protected against scrying, the party is unable to *teleport,* travel etherially, or otherwise use magic to reach their destination quickly. The PCs will have to travel overland to the fortress, landmark by landmark. The party should have little difficulty following the map or recognizing the landmarks. The PCs may travel by horse, unless they possess enough magical devices and spells to fly about. Remember, the party travels only as fast as its slowest member. If traveling by horseback, the rate of travel through the jungle is recommended to be 20 miles per day.

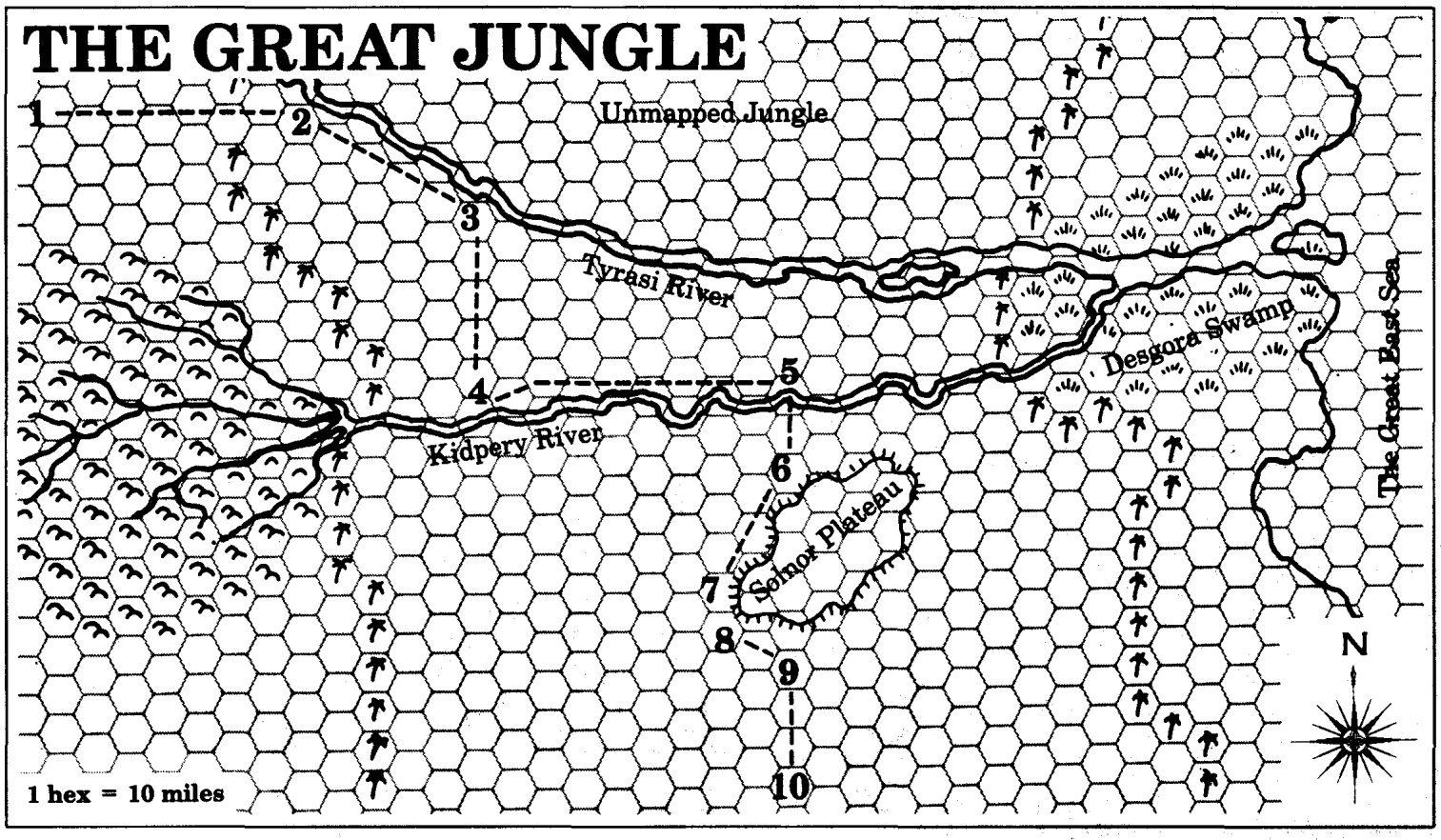
The roughly 400-mile journey should take around 20 days on horseback, not including possible encounters or rest stops. This does not give the PCs much time to hesitate or get sidetracked, and the DM should do his utmost to urge the party on its way quickly. The DM should give PCs the benefit of the doubt when it comes to time spent in encounters, searching lairs, gathering treasure, etc. If the party manages to obtain a faster movement rate, the DM should refer to pages 50-52 and page 58 of the *Dungeon Masters Guide* to determine new travel times.

Each of the following encounters on the Great Jungle Map is represented, in order, by a symbol on Ezoran's Map.

1. Laujarita, City of the Three Towers (symbol: three towers). This city, famous for the ancient triangle of towers that surrounds its walls, has long been plagued by strange beasts from the nearby unexplored jungle. The party should recognize the three-tower symbol and begin their quest here.

The PCs can purchase, at standard prices, any normal equipment they need for the jungle. There is little, if any, magical assistance available.

2. Tyrasi River (symbol: flowing water). A mighty, raging river blocks the party's path, running southeast and cutting deep into the jungle. The river is almost a mile across at this point and cannot be crossed by normal means. If the party tries to use a magical boat or raft to facilitate travel to the next landmark, the DM should judge the feasibility of the attempt, keeping in mind the horses, provisions, and men. If the water route is used successfully, the journey to the waterfall takes only half the usual time (one and a half days instead of three by horse). Take care that the party minds the waterfall!



3. Tyrasi Waterfall (symbol: a horseshoe). The raging Tyrasi River becomes the magnificent Tyrasi Waterfall here. The waterfall, almost a mile wide and over 1,000′ high, is semicircular in shape and is usually arched by rainbows caused by the mists below. It is also quite deadly. If the party has taken the water route, the DM should amend the following description accordingly.

> The mighty river begins flowing faster and faster, and the sounds of crashing water become louder ahead. As you round the next bend, a magnificent sight greets your eyes. The huge river gives way to a fantastic semicircular waterfall. Mists rise from a thousand feet below to form a beautiful rainbow over the horseshoe falls. Flying through the clouds and mists is a very large dragon that begins a perilous dive toward the bottom of the waterfall. Plunging faster and faster, he is just about to hit the water when he suddenly dissolves away into the mist. Surely, this is no ordinary dragon.

The playful creature is **Wispus**, a huge, young adult mist dragon (AC 1 or −2; MV 6″/33″; HD 11; hp 44; #AT 4; Dmg 1-4/1-4/2-24/2-8; SA dense mist breath weapon, magic use; SD magic use; AL N). Wispus lives 20 miles to the north but loves to explore and have a good time. He is very wary of strangers but will not attack unless he is forced to do so. If the PCs somehow manage to converse with Wispus, he speaks only of the joys of riding the thermals and cannot tell them anything useful regarding their quest.

The characters should not descend the cliff face; they should proceed south to the Kidpery Gorge.

If any character tumbles down the falls, he suffers 20d6 hp damage and must roll his constitution or less on 1d20 to remain conscious. The DM should also determine drowning percentages.

4. Kidpery Gorge (symbol: a crack in the earth).

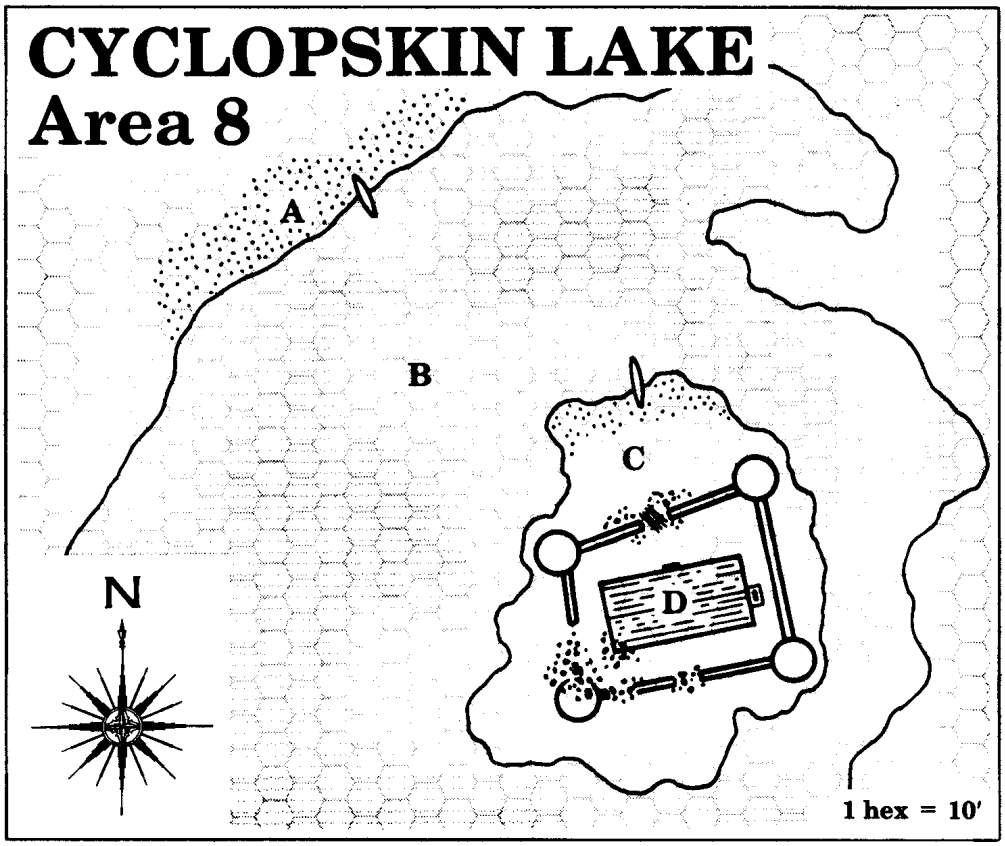
> Again, the sound of rushing water meets your ears. The jungle growth finally gives way and begins to clear. Ahead, a colossal gorge cuts across the land. Five hundred feet below you, another raging jungle river flows eastward.

The gorge is 400′ wide at this point. The party should be encouraged to travel east from here. See area 2 for movement adjustments if the party decides to travel by water.

5. Rope Bridge (symbol: a bridge).

> After traveling for days through unremarkable jungle, you see an ancient rope-and-board bridge spanning the gorge ahead of you. The bridge sways slightly in the wind and does not inspire a sense of trust.

The gorge is 300′ across and 400′ deep at this point. The bridge, actually 350′ long due to the great dip in it, is about 20′ wide and relatively sturdy. It can hold up to 2,000 lbs. before showing obvious signs of stress. The party and its horses can cross safely at half their normal movement rates, but each horse is 90% likely to panic and refuse to step



onto the bridge (war horses panic only 10% of the time). Additional panic checks can be made every six turns until the horse is more cooperative.

There is only a 5% chance per crossing that a board will collapse under a PC. The stricken character can make a dexterity roll to avoid falling. If unsuccessful, he can also make a strength roll to catch the bridge. A second strength roll or another person's aid is required to pull the fallen adventurer to safety. Only one board (if any) collapses during this crossing of the bridge.

Anyone who falls from the bridge takes 20d6 hp damage and must save to avoid unconsciousness and drowning (see area 3).

6. The Plateau (symbol: a cliff).

> A clearing opens in the dense foliage, and you gaze upward at the immense cliff ahead of you. There appears to be a massive plateau here, in the middle of nowhere. A path hugs the bottom of the cliff. Hundreds of feet above you, a strange, dragonlike creature is circling.

The creature the party sees high above the plateau is a **pteranodon,** a large, flying dinosaur (AC 7; MV 3"/15"; HD 3+3; hp 25; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; AL N). There is only a 30% chance that it will descend to attack; otherwise, it remains well out of reach of the party.

The plateau rises 2,000' above the jungle floor, and the cliffs cannot be scaled by any normal means, even by a thief. If the party does manage to ascend to the plateau, the DM must create the inhabitants of this region. The party should be encouraged to follow the path.

7. The Great Tree (symbol: a tree).

> Standing like a god of the jungle, a tree looms before you. Perhaps 30' in diameter, it dwarfs all that stands beside it. The tree could easily be the largest and oldest living thing for hundreds of miles around.

This conifer is 430' tall and completely harmless. Should any character climb the tree to get a better view of the jungle, he is able to see the cliff wall to the east, the Kidpery River to the north, and only jungle and more jungle to the west and south.

8. Cyclopskin Lake (symbol: an eye). A band of renegade cyclopskin, led by a gigantic lesser cyclops, live here on an island in the center of a jungle lake.

> The trees part, and a beautiful jungle lake lies before you. In the center of the lake, on an island, stand the ruins of an ancient keep. However, the large canoe on the beach in front of you and a similar canoe on the island indicate that perhaps the ruins are not deserted.

See the map of Cyclopskin Lake to locate the following areas:

8A. Beach. The canoe is large enough to carry three large humanoids or four normal-sized humans. There are only three large sets of oars, however. The canoe has been left here by the cyclopskin from the island (area 8C) in order to lure potential victims to them.

The beach is made of pure white sand. Numerous small freshwater crabs crawl along the surface, diving into their burrows when anything approaches.

8B. Jungle Lake. The lake, although very beautiful, is also very dangerous. A shoal of 40 warm-water **quippers** inhabit the water's depths (AC 8; MV 9"; HD ½; hp 3 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1-2; AL N). These piranha will not attack the canoes. They have no treasure.

If the PCs approach the ruins during the daytime or use a bright light source while approaching at night, the cyclopskin on watch at area 8C are alerted (there is only a 20% chance otherwise). If the party is spotted, the cyclopskin prepare a trap. When the party reaches the midpoint of the journey across the lake, the lesser cyclops, Relon the Bloody, throws boulders at them. If he misses his intended target, there is still a 60% chance for the boulder to smash the boat. There is a 25% chance per hit of capsizing the canoe. After three hits the canoe sinks anyway, having been smashed to bits by the force of the blows. The other cyclopskin hurl heavy spears and sling bullets at the party. Any PCs who fall into the lake must now deal with the piranha.

8C. Island of the Eye. A small, collapsed keep sits atop this rocky island. The main portcullis is rusty and lies amid the rocky debris of the entrance. A band of cyclopskin uses this island as a base for their raiding and killing. Their leader, a rogue lesser cyclops, found this island many years ago and slowly united four different bands of cyclopskin under his cruel and domineering rule.

Two of the creatures are always on guard near the collapsed northern gate and at either side of the collapsed tower to the southwest of the complex. These four guards are always armed, and they've piled up numerous boulders around the island for use by their leader. Unless alerted to the party's presence, the rest of the cyclopskin can be found inside the keep's main building (area 8D).

8D. Keep. This building has a large, bloody eye painted over the front door. The only other entrance is a large hole to the southwest which Relon, the lesser cyclops, uses as an entrance. All of the interior walls of the building have been knocked down for space. Unless alerted to the party's intrusion, the rest of the cyclopskin band is found here.

Cyclopskin (24): AC 3; MV 12"; HD 5; hp 21-30; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type +2; AL CE.

Relon the Bloody, lesser cyclops: AC 2; MV 15"; HD 13; hp 94; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA hurl rocks; AL CE.

Cyclopskin are 7½' tall; Relon is 20' tall. Each cyclopskin carries a large club (equal to a morning star), a great sling, and a heavy throwing spear. Relon always stands behind his forces, hurling boulders for maximum effect.

The creatures' treasure lies in a giant oaken chest under the southeast floorboards of the building. The key is around Relon's neck on a heavy silver chain worth 50 gp. Inside the chest are 11,000 cp; 2,000 sp; 2,000 ep; five gems worth 2,500 gp each; three potions; and any two miscellaneous magical items unusable by cyclopskin. The DM should roll or choose these items based on the party and their circumstances.

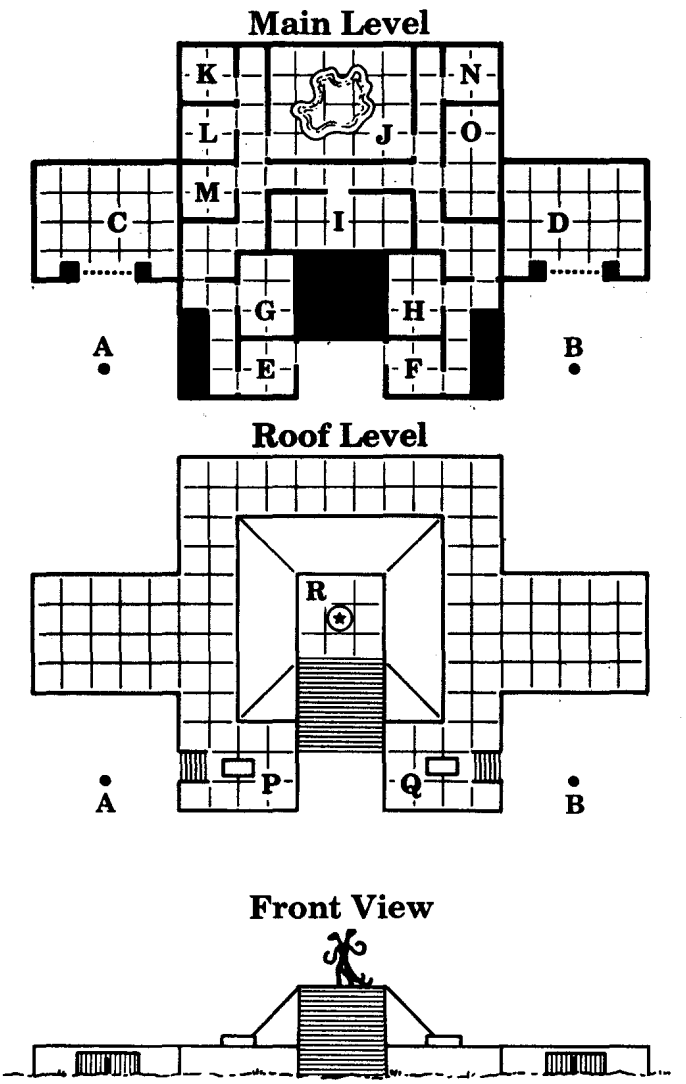
9. Yuan-ti Temple. (symbol: a snake's head).

The jungle begins to thin out into a clearing. In the center stands a large, ancient temple. From atop the temple rises the gigantic statue of a strange, double-headed monster with two tails and tentacles in place of arms. A massive staircase, 30' wide and just as tall, leads upward past two bloodstained altars to the base of the statue. A very large portcullis stands closed on each side of the main level, with large poles sticking out of the ground in front of each. Two strange leopards with medusa-like snakes sprouting from their shoulders are chained to each post.

A pair of strange humanoid creatures stands beside the eastern altar atop the temple. One creature, who is chanting an evil-sounding ritual, has a body of a man with a large snake tail on his backside. The other appears to be human but has scaly hands and vaguely reptilian features. This person is standing over a young wood elf, preparing to drive a knife into the unfortunate being's heart.

This outpost of yuan-ti is used for some of their major ceremonies in which

YUAN-TI TEMPLE



they worship Demogorgon. They have long plagued the innocent creatures of the forest. A major city of yuan-ti lies many miles to the east.

If the party attacks, the yuan-ti unchain the kamadans at areas 9A and 9B, then release those in area 9C. Next, the thessalhydra in area 9D is let loose upon the party. As a last resort, the yuan-ti themselves attack (see areas 9E, 9F, 9M, 9Q). If the kamadans, thessalhydra, and abomination yuan-ti are all killed, the priests retreat into the jungle to bring reinforcements in 2-8 days.

See the map of the yuan-ti temple to locate the following areas:

9A-B. Guard Posts. Two **kamadans** (AC 4; MV 18"; HD 4+2; hp 30 each; #AT 3 plus 4-7 snake heads; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6 plus 1-4 per snake head; SA breath weapon; AL CE) are chained to each of these two posts. They are used by the yuan-ti as the temple watchdogs.

If the party enters the clearing, the four kamadans growl loudly. The yuan-ti at the altar (area 9Q) will not stop the service, however. If the party continues to approach, the kamadans go into a frenzy and alert the entire temple to the presence of intruders. The yuan-ti abominations (see areas 9E-F) immediately unchain the kamadans and prepare for battle.

9C. Kamadan Kennel. This is the kennel for the kamadans. There are six kamadans inside here, waiting to take their turns at the guard posts (see areas 9A-B for statistics).

The portcullis is opened by a winch mechanism located outside, to the left of the room. There is nothing of value here.

9D. Thessalhydra Lair. A large, eight-headed **thessalhydra** (AC 0; MV 12"; HD 12 (body); hp 74; #AT 10; Dmg 1-6 (×8)/1-12/1-20; SA acid saliva and spitting; SD immune to acid; AL N) is kept here by the yuan-ti. Because it is well treated, it will not attack the yuan-ti or the kamadans.

The portcullis here is opened in the same manner as in area 9C. The bars have been protected against the thessalhydra's acid.

9E-F. Entrance Chambers. These are the only entrances to the temple. There are two yuan-ti abominations guarding each chamber (AC 0; MV 9"; HD 9; hp 64 each; #AT 2; Dmg 1-8 (long sword)/1-10 (bite); SA spells and psionics; SD 20% magic resistance; AL CE). These are the most dangerous of the yuan-ti. Each wears a silver necklace with an electrum medallion (value 50 gp) and carries an elfskin pouch containing 2-20 ep.

9G-H. Abomination Chambers. Each of these rooms contains two grass beds, which the abominations rest upon. The rooms are otherwise empty.

9I. Dining Room. This room contains a dining table and seven grass mats for seating. On the table lie the remains of a man — last night's dinner. A small statue of Demogorgon is the table's centerpiece. Made of solid jade inlaid with silver, it's worth 3,000 gp.

9J. Worship Pool. This pool of water is sacred to the yuan-ti. They are currently raising **Slimetooth,** a young, male water naga here (AC 5; MV 9"//18"; HD 4; hp 26; #AT 1; Dmg 1-2; SA spells; AL N; spells (cast at 3rd level): *magic missile, sleep, mirror image*).

Slimetooth has been raised since birth by the yuan-ti and considers them to be his friends. They have fed him well and hope to use him as the temple's guardian. The party will have a hard time convincing the young naga that the yuan-ti are evil and cruel. He only attacks in self-defense. At the bottom of the pool are 530 gp.

9K. High Priest's Quarters. This is the room of Yissera, high priest of the yuan-ti, who is currently conducting the ceremony at area 9Q. There is a normal bed, table, and bureau in this room, but nothing else of value.

9L-M. Lower Priests' Quarters. Each of these rooms contains a flat grass bed, with otherwise human furnishings. Two lower priests live in these rooms. Each has a human body and head, but a large snake tail grows from its backside. Currently, one is resting in area 9M; the other is at area 9Q.

Yuan-ti (half-breed) clerics (2): AC 4 (tail 0); MV 12"; HD 8; hp 54 each; #AT 3; Dmg 1-8 (long sword)/1-4 (dagger)/1-4 (tail constriction); SA spells; SD 20% magic resistance; AL CE; clerical spells (cast at 5th level) in addition to normal yuan-ti spells: *command, protection from good, light, chant, hold person* (×2), *curse*). Each priest carries 5-50 sp and a gem of 1,000 gp value.

9N. Storeroom and Larder. This room is the main storeroom for food and weapons. Several partially dismembered bodies of varying races are hung from meat hooks on the south wall. Casks of wine and spices line the east wall. To the north, a dozen or so swords and daggers are neatly arranged. There is nothing else of value here.

9O. Kitchen. This is a rather crude kitchen, containing a large cauldron and a rough stone fireplace. Meat of suspicious origin lies on a table, and a disgusting soup is being prepared in the cauldron. There is nothing of value here.

9P. Empty Altar. This bloodstained altar is dedicated to Demogorgon, the Prince of Demons. A ceremonial dagger and chalice lie at the head of the altar. The dagger and chalice are a matched set and are worth 1,000 gp together, 200 gp separately.

9Q. Altar. This altar is identical to the one at area 9P. The high priest of the yuan-ti and one of the lower priests (from area 9L) are sacrificing a wood elf.

Yissera, female yuan-ti (pureblood) cleric: AC 4; MV 12"; HD 6; hp 43; #AT 2; Dmg by weapon type; SA spells; SD magic resistance 20%; AL CE; clerical spells (cast at 9th level) in addition to regular yuan-ti spells: *command* (×2), *protection from good, ceremony, chant, know alignment, silence 15' radius, hold person, curse, cause blindness, dispel magic, cause serious wounds, cloak of fear, air walk*). Yissera has lived in the outside world for many years, acquiring great knowledge and power. Yissera recognizes adventurers as such on sight and takes no chances. After alerting the temple, she casts *silence 15' radius* on the ceremonial dagger and throws it at the leading party member. Even if she misses the character, the *silence* prevents any spell use by the party. The abominations in areas 9E-F understand the implications of this action and surround the party within the *silenced* area. The priests launch spells from atop the altars.

Yissera possesses a *long sword +2, dagger +1, staff of swarming insects* (22 charges), and a small snakeskin pouch

containing 100 pp, 50 gp, and a large emerald worth 4,000 gp.

Should the party rescue the elf on the altar, he will be very grateful but will wish to return immediately to his home deep in the jungle. The elf tells them that he is called Tymar. He is a master craftsman of fine wood statues and will gladly reward the party with some of his work if they wish. Although Tymar is not a nobleman, his friendship with the PCs is enough to make them "elf-friends." The DM can use this NPC to lead to further adventures in the Great Jungle, should the party be successful in their current mission.

Tymar, wood elf: AC 10; MV 3" (12" when healed); F4; hp 8 (30 when fully healed); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 16, I 14, W 10, D 19, C 12, Ch 15, Cm 14; AL NG; multiple nonweapon proficiencies in woodcraft; prefers to wield a long sword or dagger.

9R. Statue of Demogorgon. On this platform rests a 20'-tall statue of the demon prince Demogorgon. It is covered with slime and blood in tribute to the deity. There are four giant rubies imbedded in the eyes of the statue, each worth 5,000 gp.

10. Clearing Below the Cloud Fortress (symbol: a fortress)

> This clearing is a bit unusual. It appears that some kind of plant blight has struck here; most of the vegetation is dead or dying. Only the mushrooms and other fungi seem to be thriving. The glint of metal can be seen in the near distance. It is hard to see more clearly as the clouds above block out most of the light.

The plant blight is the result of the permanent cloud cover, as Ezoran has yet to learn how to control the movement of the cloud fortress.

If the party investigates the clearing further, continue with the following:

> The gleam of metal comes from a sword standing upright in the ground at your feet. Beside it lie the remains of a man, crushed and mangled beyond recognition. This unfortunate is wrapped in a plain black cloak, and his personal belongings lie scattered around his body.

The body is that of a half-elven ranger, Hytorir the Courageous. He was out honing his tracking abilities when he discovered this strange clearing. After a few days here, he noticed the cloud above never moved and used his *wings of flying* to investigate. He safely entered Ezoran's cloud fortress but fell to his death through the pit trap in area 8 (*wings of flying* can be used only once per day).

If the PCs check the body more closely they can discern that he was a male half-elf of impressive bearing, dead about a week. Ezoran and his mistress, Draxella, were too busy to notice Hytorir's intrusion and have no idea that his remains lie below.

Even if the party manages to bring Hytorir back to life, he is unable to go with them to the fortress as he requires at least a week of bed rest before he can adventure again. He will, however, provide the location and general nature of the fortress. Hytorir asks for all his remaining magical items in order to protect himself while alone, and for some temporary shelter away from the clearing where he can be safe. He will lend the PCs his *wings of flying* if they promise to return the cloak when they are through with it.

The PCs might use a *speak with dead* spell or similar magic on the dead ranger. The DM should keep in mind the short duration of this spell and how little information Hytorir possesses.

Hytorir the Courageous, male half-elf: AC 2; MV 12"; R9; hp 74; S 18/56, I 15, W 16, D 17, C 18, Ch 14, Co 14; #AT 3/2; Dmg by weapon type; AL NG; spells *speak with animals, protection from evil;* magical items not destroyed in the fall: *wings of flying* (covering body); *two-handed sword +2, giant slayer* (sticking in the ground); *bag of holding,* 1,000 lb. capacity (under body); *ring of animal friendship* (on right hand).

Hytorir wears elfin chain mail, a gift from some wood elves. All of his potions, a *ring of X-ray vision,* and a *long bow +1* were destroyed in the fall. The *bag of holding* still holds 1,000 pp, a couple of low-level spell books, and some greater mistletoe. Scattered around the body are 50 gp and three gems (100 gp, 200 gp, and 550 gp value).

The Cloud Fortress

Ezoran captured this cloud fortress from Imperion, the now-dead cloud giant. Combined with his own magical enchantments and those of his lady-love, Draxella, it will eventually be quite a formidable stronghold. But, fortunately for the PCs, he has not yet completed his work.

Draxella is a sorceress who recently returned to Ezoran's side after a long and arduous quest for rare spell components. She has just reached the cloud fortress after following clues left for her by Ezoran at their old rooms (in a large city in the DM's campaign). Because she has not been here long, she knows very little about the castle, the dragon, or anything else of use. She is currently within the castle, appointing her new chambers and equipping her laboratory (see room 13 for Draxella's statistics).

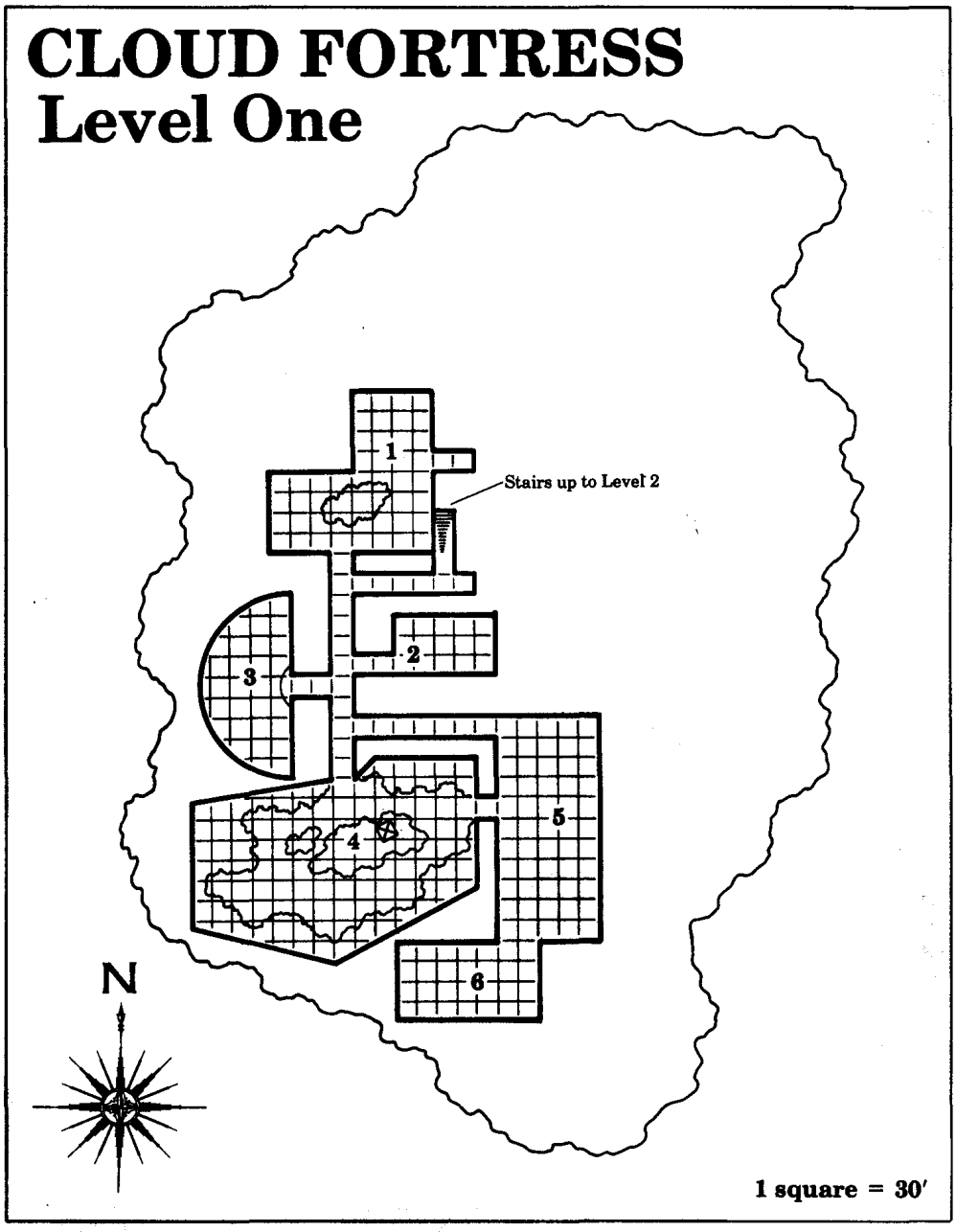
The fortress is only 800' above the jungle floor at its lowest point. Ezoran's early tampering with the structure caused it to drop almost 1,000' before he could stop its descent. He still has no idea how to control the cloud it rests upon and therefore has inadvertently blocked most of the sunlight from reaching the ground below. Ezoran is currently torturing Cumulus, the captured cloud dragon, for the secret of how to control the castle.

The entire structure radiates magic of an indeterminable nature and is under the influence of a permanent *non-detection*-type spell placed on the keep as part of Ezoran's renovation. (There is very little an Arch-Mage cannot do, given enough time and gold.) No location or information-gathering spells operate within the confines of the cloud fortress.

The walls and flooring of the fortress appear to be made of stone, but PCs will find that spells and items that should affect stonework will not affect the castle. This material cannot be broken or passed through by any means (even ethereally). No *teleporting* is allowed in or out, and magical scrying cannot see inside the cloud fortress. The walls themselves are actually only 1" thick.

The ceilings are usually 30' high, and the entire fortress is lighted by indirect *continual light* spells.

The doors are actually lighted panels which temporarily disappear when touched. Secret doors appear as normal walls and only disappear when their



corners are touched in the proper sequence (the DM should create the sequences beforehand). Such doors can be found by normal but not magical means. Since these doors are 24' tall, characters must find some way to reach the upper corners in order to activate them. The only doors that appear wooden and are of normal human size can be found in the trap-rooms of area 8. They were put there by Ezoran when he increased the defenses of the fortress.

If the party's presence is discovered, Ezoran casts a *guards and wards* spell upon the fortress. He takes no other aggressive action, preferring instead to let his magical protections (and Draxella) weaken the party before he has to engage in outright combat.

Fortress Level One

This level is to be Ezoran's guard level and the site of future expansion. Imperion, the cloud giant, planned to expand his castle further but stopped once the upper levels reached a comfortable size for only one giant. The lower level is, therefore, only half a level. The DM may expand on the fortress here or on any other level, if such is desired.

1. Vapor Rat Lair.

> This appears to be an unremarkable room, except for the strange cloud pillar in its center. The pillar undulates strangely but otherwise remains stationary. Out of the corner of your eye, you see a strange little cloud moving closer to you. It stops and begins to take form. More cloud bodies move closer . . . .

This room is identical to the rest of the level, except for the cloud pillar standing in the middle of the room. It is a natural occurrence and quite harmless. The pillar, however, serves as cover for a lair of 15 **vapor rats** (AC 6 (or special); MV 12"//16"(1"); HD 2; hp 15 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1-2; SA *stinking cloud;* SD gaseous form; AL CN). The rats attack on sight and continue to fight until half of them are dead or severely wounded. They then turn gaseous and retreat to the clouds. The rats possess no treasure.

2. Map Room. This room is filled with racks and racks of maps and charts that Imperion used for navigating the cloud castle. Most of the names and descriptions are written in the language of the cloud giants, but the maps contain a wealth of information about the entire planet. The DM can use these maps to provide the characters with clues for any ongoing quests or as a means of leading the party to greater and greater adventures and mysteries.

3. Observatory. The floor of this room is completely transparent. The effect is similar to the sixth-level magic-user spell *glassee.* Observers can see down, but those below cannot gaze in. The floor is made of the same material as the rest of the fortress, so characters may step onto the window with no fear of falling through (a fascinating yet unnerving experience, to be sure). Through the window, the PCs should be able to see the clearing below.

The semicircular wall opposite the entrance is covered with engraved sky and constellation charts as well as a large-scale map of the planet's continents (DM's world). The engravings are inlaid with gem dust, with different types of gems used to represent different features. The engravings cannot be removed, but the dust can be scraped out (DM's discretion as to how much, and what value can be recovered).

4. Cloud Room. This room has cloud material permanently covering the walls. A natural cloud pillar undulates in the center of the room. Unlike the similar pillar in room 1, this pillar obscures the chute that leads downward from the pit trap in room 8. If any character puts a hand or sword into the cloud material of the pillar, he can touch the outer wall of the chute. Anyone who falls into the pit trap in room 8 falls through this chute and all the way down to the clearing, 800′ below.

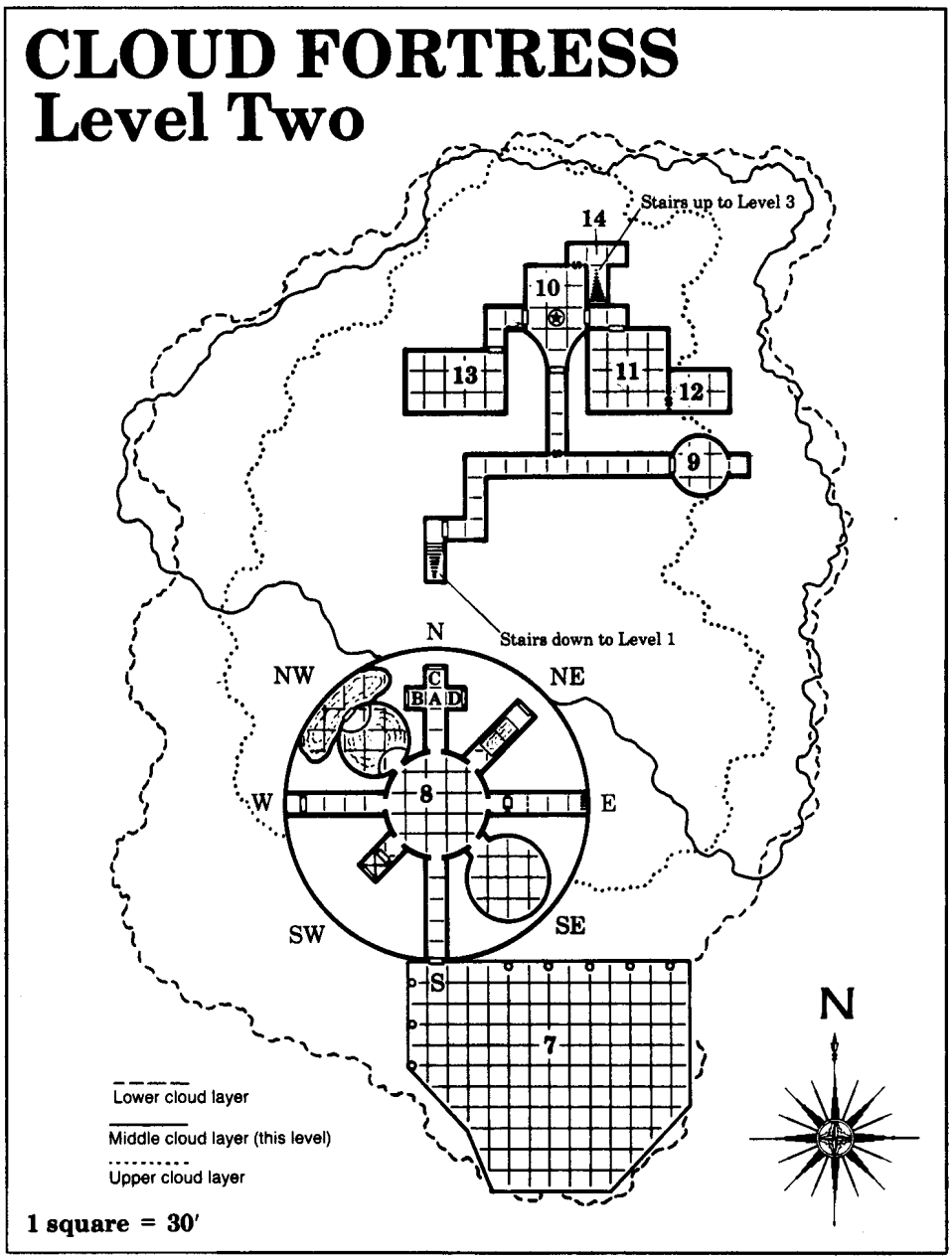
5-6. Storage Rooms. These two rooms are filled with giant-sized furniture and possessions — Imperion's belongings that Ezoran didn't want. The magic-user thought that the materials might be useful some day, so he threw them all down here. A huge oaken chest contains Imperion's clothing. Included in the chest is a pair of purple silk pajamas and a yellow silk *sash of fire giant strength.* Imperion never realized that the sash was magical, since his strength was already at least as good naturally. Ezoran foolishly disregarded the ensemble when searching through the giant's possessions (as might the PCs). Some oversized pillows are heaped in one corner along with a large pile of furs. Other than the magical sash, there is nothing here of any significant value.

Fortress Level Two

The PCs will most likely enter the fortress on this level, from the landing stage (area 7). The fortress's main protections are found on this level, in areas 8 and 10.

7. Landing and Observation Platform. This gigantic platform is surrounded by a railing. It was primarily used as an observation deck and as a landing and receiving area for Imperion's friends and frequent guests.

One such visitor was recently captured by Ezoran and has been magically chained to one of the hitching posts to the north. This poor **dragon horse** (AC 0; MV 24″/48″; HD 8; hp 54; #AT 2; Dmg 1-8/1-8; SA breath (spells); SD etherealness, heightened senses, 25% magic resistance; AL NG) wears an antimagic collar that prevents it from using any of its powers (and repels all spells used against it). The dragon horse can fly around, but only to the end of the 50′ chain. This is Ezoran's cruel joke on the beast — that it can see the sky but not fly in it. If rescued, the dragon horse may accompany a PC as a companion/steed after the adventure is over. The 'horse will not enter the fortress under any circumstances, as it must take to the air soon or go insane. Only physical force can break the chain (a successful *bend bars/lift gates* roll will do it), destroying the enchantment.



8. Rainbow Room.

Passing through the 20′-high archway, you enter a large, circular room about 150′ in diameter. Eight giant archways painted in differing colors are evenly spaced around the walls. You turn around to see that the archway by which you entered is violet colored on this side. Directly across the room to the north is a yellow archway. Beyond each archway is a short corridor ending in a closed door.

This is the major trap room of the entire complex. There are many things about this area that bear notice.

The central circular room can rotate about its center, but the rooms beyond the colored archways remain where they are. Therefore, an archway of a

specific color does not always lead to the same room. Roll d100 each round to determine the direction of rotation. The party will not notice this motion and will never go through a doorway when it is between rooms.

01-40	Rotate one room clockwise.
41-80	Rotate one room counterclockwise.
81-00	Central room does not rotate this round.

Each archway is 20′ tall, color-coded, and magically trapped against anyone passing through from the central room outward. All the portals are pure white and harmless from the other side. The archways are similar in effect to a *prismatic sphere* spell, and can be neutralized as per that spell. Starting from the south (when the party first enters the room) and going counterclockwise, the archways are:

Violet	Save vs. spells or become astral
Black	Not trapped; *teleport* to room 9
Red	10 hp damage, no save
Orange	20 hp damage, no save
Yellow	40 hp damage, no save
Green	Save vs. poison or die
Blue	Save vs. petrification or be turned to stone
Indigo	Save vs. wands or go insane

After passing through each archway (except the black one), there is another trap waiting:

East Room: Tilting Pit Trap. Thirty feet past the archway, a stout oak door blocks the corridor. When a PC opens the door and steps 10′ farther in, the entire corridor tilts downward. On a successful dexterity check, the PC runs quickly uphill and back through the door. Otherwise, the hapless adventurer slides down the ramp toward what once appeared to be a door in the far corridor wall. This door is actually an illusion covering a large set of spikes. The unfortunate PC takes 3d10 hp damage from the fall plus 3d6 hp damage from the spikes. The PC is also trapped at the bottom of the pit, as the walls are now vertical and too slick to climb.

Northeast Room: Acid Pit Trap. The PCs must cross a 20′-wide pit of boiling acid to get to the door on the other side of this long room. This seems simple enough, except for the *wall of force* across the pool's middle. Anyone swinging or flying across the pool hits the *wall* (which is completely invisible) and takes 2d6 hp damage. He must make a successful constitution check to avoid losing consciousness for 1-4 rounds. A strength check is also necessary to avoid dropping any items held by the PC. Any character who falls into the acid takes 1d6 hp damage from the heat and 2d6 hp damage from the acid each round. Immersed items must save vs. acid every round or dissolve. This acid does not affect gems or precious metals. The *wall of force* does not extend to the bottom of the acid pool — it stops 6″ below the surface. The door on the other side of the room opens onto a solid wall.

North Room: Teleport Traps. When a PC enters area A, he is *teleported* to area B. Materializing in B, he is immediately *teleported* to area C, then to area D. Area D send the character back to area A, and so on. Anyone so trapped is flashed from place to place so rapidly he appears as a blur to someone standing in the corridor.

The trapped person cannot move fast enough to walk, run, or fly out, even if using a *haste* spell. The doors in the alcoves are fakes. The only ways to get out of this trap is to cast a *dispel magic* on area A and return to the corridor, or turn ethereal/astral and step back into the corridor.

Northwest Room: Crocodile Trap. The entry corridor leads to a semicircular ledge 4′ above a large pool of water. A doorway exits from a similar ledge across the pool.

The pool is inhabited by 10 normal **crocodiles** (AC 5; MV 6″//12″; HD 3; hp 14 each; #AT 2; Dmg 2-8/1-12; AL N). There is no trick to crossing the pool of water; the trap is on the other side.

The far door opens near the bottom of a very large tank of water. When the door is opened, the force of this flood washes anyone who fails a *bend bars/lift gates* roll into the pool with the crocodiles. The additional water will not fill the pool higher than the ledges.

West Room: Guillotine Trap. The wooden door at the far end of this long corridor appears to be very sturdy. The doorknob won't turn. Any character who forces the door discovers that it is actually made of very flimsy wood veneer. That character is immediately sliced by a guillotine trap behind the door (the DM should determine which part of the character has been severed, noting method of entry). The blade does not qualify as a trap and cannot be detected by a thief's abilities, but magical warning is still possible, and any character who steps through the broken door after first checking for traps gets a dexterity check to avoid the blade. The tiny room beyond the door is empty.

Southwest Room: Pit Room. This trap is very simple. The first door is a one-way version of the doors in the rest of the keep, activated by a single touch instead of a sequence. When a PC steps beyond the first door, the floor disappears and the character falls (through the cloud pillar in room 4) to his death 800′ below. The PC has one chance to avoid falling by catching the doorsill he stepped from (on a successful dexterity check). Failure indicates a fall all the way down. The other door is a fake.

South Room: Not Trapped. This corridor leads to area 7.

Southeast Room: Empty Room. There is nothing whatsoever in this room (or the DM may insert a trap of his own).

9. Circular Room. This room has a black portal on the east side and a normal door on the west side. Entering the black portal *teleports* a character to area 8 (in the southern corridor, near the main entrance doors).

10. Guard Room.

> The door opens into a bottle-shaped room. You have entered at the neck; ahead the corridor fans out into a larger room. Where the corridor begins to fan out stands a large stone statue of a warrior. There are doors to his left and right. A large tapestry completely covers the north wall.

Anyone who enters this room, except in the presence of Ezoran or Draxella, activates the statue, a **stone golem** (AC 5; MV 6″; HD 14; hp 60; #AT 1; Dmg 3-24; SA *slow* spell; SD +2 or better weapon to hit, immune to most spells, limited regeneration, heightened senses; AL N).

It is impossible to reach the doors without either defeating the golem or

being allowed to pass. Only one person at a time can engage the golem in melee due to the narrowness of the entryway.

This golem has the additional ability of regeneration. It can repair damage to itself at a rate of 1 hp per turn, but once taken below −10 hp, it will not rise again. The golem can also see and attack on the Ethereal and Astral planes. It cannot be tricked with disguises. If the party retreats from this room, the golem does not pursue.

The north end of the room is covered by a massive tapestry of Ezoran, his face hidden in shadows. Touching the figure of Ezoran opens the secret door to room 14. The tapestry itself is of no value except to Ezoran and Draxella.

11. Draxella's Laboratory. This room is filled with new glassware, empty bookshelves, and a giant iron cauldron. Draxella has just moved in and has yet to begin her experiments. The DM should develop the specifics of the laboratory's contents in case the PCs decide to keep some for themselves. All of the items are of the finest quality.

There is a secret door behind the bookshelves on the east wall. It leads to room 12.

12. Draxella's Treasure Room. There are nine chests in here. Eight are closed, unlocked, and empty. The ninth chest is large and very ornate, but not empty. Inside this chest are 5,000 pp; 11,000 gp; and four gems worth 5,000 gp each. The rest of Draxella's treasure is on her person.

13. Draxella's Bedroom. This room contains a bed, a large bureau, a closet, and a small chest. The room is filled with trinkets and clothing, and its occupant is currently at home.

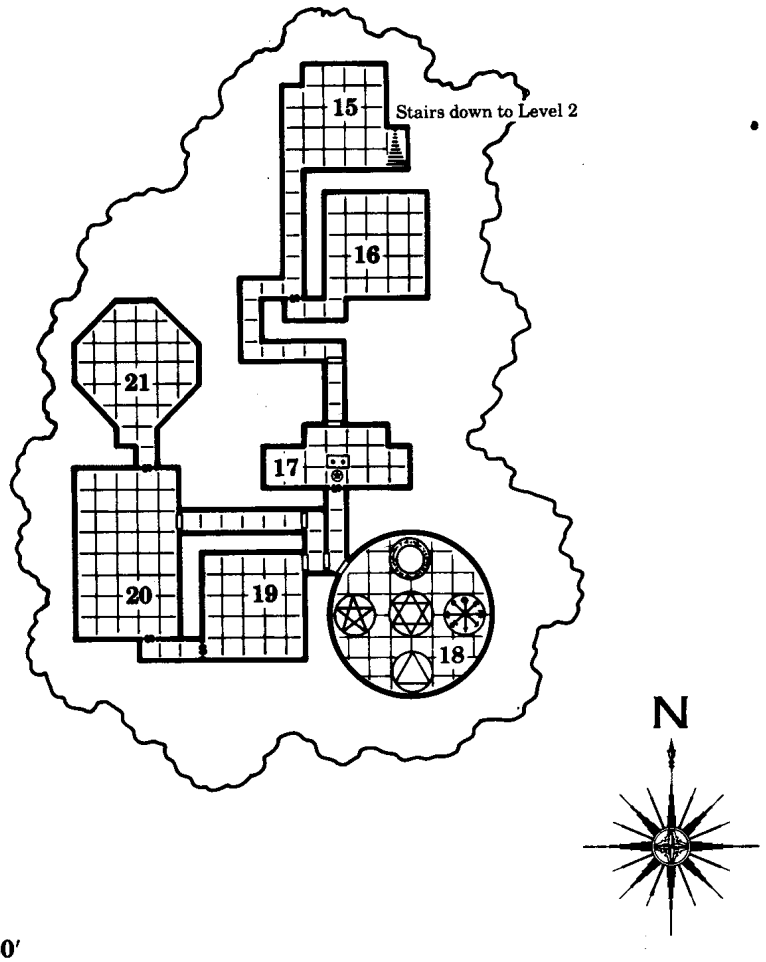
Draxella: AC −4; MV 12″; MU14; hp 52; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 12, I 17, W 14, D 18, C 16, Ch 16, Co 16; AL NE; spells: *detect magic, magic missile* (×5), *protection from good, read magic, detect invisibility, ESP, knock, mirror image, web, dispel magic, fireball, infravision, lightning bolt, slow, ice storm, polymorph other, polymorph self, Rary's mnemonic enhancer* (used), *conjure air elemental, feeblemind, telekinesis, teleport, globe of invulnerability, repulsion, power word stun.*

Draxella owns *bracers of defense* (AC 3), a *ring of protection +2*, a *bag of holding* (500 lb. capacity), a *ring of air elemental command*, a *dagger +2/+4 vs. good creatures*, a *cloak and boots of elvenkind*, and *robes of protection +1*. In her *bag of holding* are her spell books (normal and traveling), 10 pearls worth 100 gp each (for *identify* spells), 500 pp, and 100 gp.

Draxella, Ezoran's associate and lover, is a very powerful mage and should be played as cunning and dangerous. Being shrewd and intelligent, she is not above joining the party in order to lead them into a trap. If she hears the battle with the golem in room 10 (5% cumulative chance per round of combat), she alters her appearance and the condition of her room to suggest that she is Ezoran's prisoner. She tells any rescuers that she is a 9th-level magic-user, forced to be Ezoran's slave and kept in this room by the golem.

She has spent many years with the Arch-Mage and will never betray him, even if *charmed*. Her knowledge of the fortress is currently limited to this level and to level one. She knows where the stairs (area 14) are but won't volunteer this information.

CLOUD FORTRESS
Level Three



1 square = 30′

14. Secret Stairway. There is a *magic mouth* spell on these stairs. Anyone who steps on them hears a pleasant male voice announce, "Company's coming!" If Ezoran is unaware of the party's intrusion, he will not hear this message in room 20 above. However, if Draxella has not yet been encountered, she hears the voice and attempts to kill the PCs (especially mages) while they are still in the stairwell. She casts *fireball* first, then assesses the situation.

Fortress Level Three

15. Ezoran's Quarters. The stairs rise into a large living area, complete with a dining table, bed, two closets, and a nightstand. The closets contain normal clothing and a small chest. The chest contains two bottles of fine wine valued at 300 gp each. There is nothing else of value here.

16. Torture Chamber. Amid a mass of large, wicked instruments of pain and suffering lies the violated body of Imperion, once the neutral-good cloud giant of this fortress. His body, although well preserved (by *preserve* spells), bears many gashes and marks indicating torture. Ezoran has also removed many parts of the body for use as spell components. Imperion has been dead for 15 days plus the amount of time it took the party to reach this room.

17. Demon Room.

> This room has only one obvious purpose. A large sacrificial altar occupies the center of the room. Two grooves run down its length, leading to a golden jar at its foot. Looming over the altar is a hideous statue, its hulking body and vast wings indicate demonic origins. The cruel eyes appear to be watching you.

The statue is of the demon Fraz-Urb'luu, the Prince of Deception (see *Monster Manual II,* page 39). Ezoran has exchanged services, information, and treasure with the demon prince many times, and worships the demon's mastery of the art of deceiving his opponents. Fraz-Urb'luu has great affection for the Arch-Mage (Ezoran acquired his quasit familiar, Pilthet, through his association with the demon prince) and appreciates the attention and information Ezoran affords. He is currently using Ezoran to locate his long-lost staff, an artifact of extraordinary power. He has promised Ezoran demonlike abilities upon the staff's recovery.

The statue itself is over 12′ tall, but harmless unless the party attempts to defile it. For each blow struck or action taken against the statue, there is a 10% chance that the demon prince will notice the desecration and will make a mental note to cause problems for the adventurers later.

When the statue's right arm is pulled down, the entire idol slides to the west to reveal a secret passage leading south.

The golden jar by the altar is inscribed with many runes which tell the history of Fraz-Urb'luu. It does not reveal his true name, however. The information on the vessel is very useful, and a sage might pay as much as 5,000 gp for it. The jar itself is worth only 500 gp.

There is a matching sacrificial dagger in a secret compartment of the altar. The dagger is jewel-encrusted and worth 1,000 gp.

If Ezoran has been alerted to the party's presence, he *teleports* in and attacks (see room 20 for his statistics). If the battle goes badly for him, he retreats through the secret door to room 20.

18. Summoning Chamber.

> You enter a large, circular, domed chamber. Four magical diagrams are partially inscribed on the floor of this room. A fifth diagram, at the center of the room, is complete — and occupied. A large, hairy, winged, apelike creature gestures at you. High above the monster, hanging from the ceiling, is a small wire birdcage.

The central diagram contains a **type IV demon** (AC −1; MV 9″/12″; HD 11; hp 77; #AT 3; Dmg 1-4/1-4/2-8; SA +2 "to hit" bonus; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; AL CE). If the party breaks the diagram's protective circle, the demon attacks immediately. If significantly harmed, it *gates* in other demons.

The birdcage is actually a *prison of Zagyg.* Its current prisoner is Cumulus, the cloud dragon. The cage cannot be retrieved without breaking the circle of protection around the demon.

Cumulus, a huge, ancient, male cloud dragon: AC 0 or −3; MV 6″/39″; HD 14; hp 112; #AT 4; Dmg 1-10/1-10/3-36/3-12; SA breath weapon, magic use; SD magic use, 50% magic resistance when gaseous; AL N).

If Cumulus has been changed into a demondand (see Starting the Adventure), the demon in the circle is replaced by Cumulus, and the birdcage is empty.

Cumulus, as a kelubar demondand: AC −2; MV 12″/24″; HD 13; hp 59; #AT 3; Dmg 2-8/2-8/4-16; SA acid slime, spells; SD +2 or better weapon to hit; immune to acid, poison, fear, illusion; half damage from cold or fire; has infravision and ultravision; AL CE.

19. Ezoran's Laboratory. A massive laboratory loaded with materials for potions, wands, scrolls, etc. occupies this room. This is a treasure trove to any mage. There are hundreds of potion vials, beakers, rods, staves, and wands lining the shelves and tables, and 10 chests against the far wall. The DM should detail the contents of this room before running the adventure. The chests are either empty or contain valueless or perishable goods used in making potions. All the items are nonmagical. There is a secret door behind the southernmost shelves on the west wall; it leads to room 20.

20. Library. If the party has not encountered Ezoran before, he is in this room. If alerted to the PCs' presence, Ezoran heads out the secret door to the south. He has no wish to battle inside his library and waits for the adventurers in room 17. Otherwise, he is sitting at the table in the center of the room with his back toward the east wall.

If the party encountered Ezoran in room 17, he has retreated here after the battle and has already gathered his spell books. He then heads for the nearest exit and proceeds to circle around the party. If the PCs are obviously too strong for him, he leaves the fortress and, once outside, *teleports* away.

Besides a large collection of valuable reference works, the library contains Ezoran's spell books (unless he has had time to collect them), a *manual of bodily health,* and his diary (containing the command words for all of his items and for the *prison of Zagyg*). If the PCs page through the diary, they find a folded piece of parchment. A message, written in charred letters, reads, "What news of my staff? Get busy!" and is signed "F."

The secret door to the south leads to room 19, and the secret door to the north leads to a treasure room.

Ezoran the Deceiver: AC −1; MV 12″; A12/MU18 (A12/MU19 with quasit); hp 79 (103 with quasit); #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 17, I 19, W 14, D 17, C 15, Ch 18, Co 17; AL CE; SA spells, assassination; SD spells, regeneration (with quasit), 25% magic resistance (with quasit); spells: *magic missile* (×2), *protection from good, shield, shocking grasp, audible glamer, invisibility, mirror image, stinking cloud, strength, dispel magic, haste, hold person, phantasmal force, slow, fear, fumble, hallucinatory terrain, ice storm, polymorph other, cloudkill, cone of cold, monster summoning III, teleport, wall of force, chain lightning, guards and wards* (possibly used), *project image, limited wish, power word stun, volley, mind blank* (used), *Otto's irresistible dance, power word blind, shape change.*

Ezoran owns *long sword +2, nine lives stealer* (six left); *bracers of defense AC 2;* a *portable hole;* a *necklace of adaptation;* a *hat of disguise* (in the form of a small bone pin in his hair); a potion of *invisibility;* two potions of *extra-healing;* and scrolls of *monster summoning VII* and *protection from magical edged weapons.*

His other abilities include permanent *fly* and *tongues* spells on his person (18th-level magic), and 25% magic resistance, regeneration, *infravision,* etc. from his quasit familiar.

The *portable hole* contains Ezoran's spell books (if he has had time enough to grab them), six gems (200 gp, 300 gp, 400 gp, 1,000 gp, 1,250 gp, and 2,000 gp), 500 pp, and 30 gp.

Ezoran has a quasit familiar named **Pilthet** (AC 2; MV 15″/24″; HD 3; hp 22; #AT 3; Dmg 1-2/1-2/1-4; SA dexterity drain; SD *detect good* and *detect magic;* regeneration; become *invisible;* blast of *fear;* magical or cold iron weapons to hit; immune to cold, fire, lightning; 25% magic resistance; AL CE). Pilthet's other forms are that of an ordinary bat and a large wolf. Because he is mentally linked with the demon prince Fraz-Urb'luu, Pilthet's actions are not always in the best interests of his human "master," as Fraz-Urb'luu's interests come first.

The DM must plan Ezoran's actions as much ahead of time as possible. The variety of items, spells, and actions available to Ezoran leaves the DM with a great deal of latitude.

Ezoran loves deceiving his opponents. His true countenance has never been seen, as he always wears great black robes and his magical *hat of disguise.* His life is his most important possession, and he always retreats to fight another day. Ezoran is not an honorable man and is not above using his assassin abilities to dispose of a foe.

21. Ezoran's Treasure Vault. Inside this room is a pile of treasure — no chests, no locks, no traps — just coins and gems. This lack of wards should scare an adventuring party even more than normal traps would, so the DM should play up the eeriness of the situation.

The treasure consists of 12,000 sp, 3,000 ep, 11,000 gp, 28 pieces of jewelry, and 70 random gems. There are no magical items here, as all such pieces are held by Ezoran and Draxella.

Concluding the Adventure

Should the party successfully rescue Cumulus, anything within the two dragons' power to grant is theirs. Money and magic can be rewards, and the DM must decide what items are in the dragons' possession. It should be quite a storehouse, and even the removal of a few minor items or coins will scarcely dent their combined hoard. It is recommended that the PCs receive no more than 50,000 gp worth of magical items, gems, coins, and jewelry. However, information, maps, and the like are the best possible rewards for the party members. Cumulus has had over 400 years of treasure hunting and is quite intelligent. He knows much about rare and wondrous legendary magical items.

Cumulus is especially interested in Imperion's observatory and map rooms (rooms 2 and 3). Combining his already extensive knowledge in these areas with the giant's records and the mage's charts, Cumulus can gain insight into hundreds of long-unsolved mysteries.

If the PCs decipher the cryptic note found in Ezoran's diary, Cumulus may be able to discover the location of the demon prince's staff. A good-aligned party should definitely want to see this artifact destroyed, leading to a new quest.

Of course, the final decisions will depend on the DM's imagination and creativity, and the make-up and performance of the adventurers' party. Ω